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Memoirs of the Rev. John McDowell, D.D
and the Rev. William A. McDowell, D.D.

John M. Dowell

# MEMOIRS

OF THE

# REV. JOHN McDOWELL, D. D.,

AND THE

# REV. WILLIAM A. McDOWELL, D. D.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.,
OF ALBANY.

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# CONTENTS.

## MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN McDOWELL, D. D.


PREFACE, ..... iv

CHAPTER I.

FROM HIS BIRTH TO HIS SETTLEMENT AT ELIZABETHTOWN, .... 1

CHAPTER II.

HIS MINISTRY AT ELIZABETHTOWN, ..... 13

CHAPTER III.

HIS MINISTRY IN CONNECTION WITH THE CENTRAL CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, ..... 109

CHAPTER IV.

FROM HIS LEAVING THE CENTRAL CHURCH TILL HIS DEATH, .. 128

CHAPTER V.

SUMMARY OF THE EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS OF HIS MINISTRY, AND HOW THEY HAVE BEEN ATTAINED, ..... 165

CHAPTER VI.

COMMEMORATIVE LETTERS, ..... 189

MEMOIR OF THE REV. WILLIAM A. McDOWELL, D. D.

CHAPTER I.

His Life, ..... 263

CHAPTER II.

His Character, ..... 286

CHAPTER III.

Commemorative Letters, ..... 294

# PREFACE.

The basis of this Memoir of Dr. JOHN MCDOWELL is an account of the leading events of his life, which I committed to paper, as he communicated it to me, in June, 1852, and which he reproduced substantially, in the form of a Semi-Centennary Discourse, at the close of 1854. The filling up of the outline is partly from my own recollections; partly from information furnished by his friends, especially his daughter, Mrs. Rice; partly from a diary covering the period of his theological education, and his first two years in the ministry; but chiefly from a vast number of his letters, ranging from youth to old age, which, of themselves, supply the material for nearly a continuous history of his life. Of these letters I have made liberal use, as forming at once the

most authentic account of his labours, and the most striking portraiture of his character.

The letters of personal recollections from his friends are introduced without any reference to the fact that they necessarily include considerable repetition. But as each friend has described him in his own way, and as each has written out of the fulness of an affectionate remembrance, it is presumed that any uniformity necessarily incident to a description of the same subject, will be more than compensated by the fine genial tone and excellent taste, by which the letters are pervaded.

It was not originally intended to include in this volume more than the Memoir of Dr. John McDowell; but, as I proceeded with that part of my work, I found that himself and his brother, Dr. William A. McDowell, had so much in common, and were so intertwined in affection, purpose, and life, that it seemed due to the memory of both, that each should be represented in the same volume. I ventured to make the suggestion to those more immediately concerned, and, as it met from both families a favourable re-

sponse, I have carried out my idea as well as I could. As the time for writing the Memoir of the younger brother was necessarily limited, and the material within my reach was by no means ample, I have been able to go less into the details of his history than I could have wished; but I trust I have succeeded in embodying the more important facts of his life, and the more distinctive lineaments of his beautiful character. If this volume shall be instrumental, even in a humble degree, of perpetuating the memory, and deepening the posthumous influence, of these two brothers by blood, brothers in Christ, and brothers in the ministry, whom the whole Church delights to honour, I can ask no more.

# MEMOIR

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## CHAPTER I.

### From his Birth to his Settlement at Elizabethtown.

What I propose, in undertaking this Memoir, is to present the subject of it, as far as I can, just as he was, in respect to the leading acts and events of his life, and the more distinctive features of his character. If any, in reading what I am to write, expect to be amused or dazzled by eccentric or brilliant characteristics, I give them notice, here at the beginning, that they have taken up the wrong book; whereas, on the other hand, if I do not trace the career of one of the most judicious, conscientious, laborious and successful ministers of the age, I shall have failed in the work to which I am about to address myself.

John McDowell was born in the town of Bedminster, Somerset County, N. J., on the 10th of September, 1780. He was a son of Matthew and Elizabeth (Anderson) McDowell, both of whom were born in America, though the parents of each had emigrated hither from the North of Ireland. Their ancestors were originally from Scotland, and are believed to have been among the numerous Presbyterians who passed over to Ireland, sometime between the years 1660 and 1670, in order to escape the operation of the oppressive Act of Uniformity, in the reign of Charles the Second. His ancestry, as far back as he could trace them, were exemplary professors of the Christian faith.

His parents dedicated him to God in the ordinance of Baptism, in the Presbyterian church of Lamington, of which they were exemplary members; and they were careful to redeem the baptismal pledge by training him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He was especially taught to regard the Sabbath with the utmost reverence; and, after the public services of the day, the parents were accustomed regularly to catechise their children, hear them repeat texts of Scripture and give an account of the sermons which they had heard, and by their own faithful and seasonable instructions, to endeavour to impress Divine truth

upon their minds and hearts. Under this careful Christian nurture, and especially through the unremitting efforts of his excellent mother, he had the whole of the Assembly's Catechism lodged in his memory, at the age of five years, and before he had learned to read.

When he had reached the age of eleven, he became deeply concerned in respect to his immortal interests, and the great question,—What he should do to be saved, pressed upon him with overwhelming urgency. At length, after a somewhat protracted season of anxiety and distress, he was enabled, as he believed, to accept of an offered salvation, and thus to find rest to his soul; though his mind seems, for years afterwards, to have been often subject to doubt and perplexity, on account of the languor of his religious affections, and the frequent failure of his good resolutions.

From the time that he first indulged the hope that he had become the subject of renewing grace, he felt a strong desire to devote himself to the ministry of the Gospel. But the practicability of this seemed at least doubtful; for there was no classical school in the neighbourhood, and his father was unwilling to incur the expense of sending him away from home. Accordingly, he continued to work upon his father's farm for the four following years; but, at the age of fifteen, a

classical school having been established by the Rev. William Boyd, within two miles of his father's residence, he was allowed to become a member of it. Here he continued diligently engaged in his studies for about three years, (though his studies were considerably interrupted by labours on the farm), when he was fitted to enter College at an advanced standing. The school closed shortly after he left it; and he was always accustomed to recognize in the period of its establishment and its continuance, a signal token of the Divine favour, having an important bearing upon his whole future life.

In the fall of 1799, he entered the Junior class in Princeton College, then under the Presidency of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, who was regarded as one of the brightest lights of the Presbyterian Church. At this period, most of our colleges were, in a greater or less degree, in sympathy with the Infidelity of Revolutionary France; and so deeply did the College of New Jersey share in this calamity that the majority of the students were avowed infidels, and open scoffers at all religion, while the number of those who made any pretensions to piety was exceedingly small. But, notwithstanding he had not yet made a public profession of his faith, he seems to have encountered successfully the

manifold temptations to which he was subjected, and held fast his integrity as a Christian throughout his whole college course. He graduated with honour in September, 1801.

After his graduation, he engaged as a teacher, in Sussex county, for six months; though, as he had the children of two families only under his care, he was able, at the same time, to prosecute his own studies. He commenced the study of Theology under the direction of the Rev. H. W. Hunt, of Newton, N. J.; but, in the spring of 1802, he went to study under Dr. Woodhull at Freehold, who was, at that time, well known as a teacher of Theology. He had his home in Dr. Woodhull's family, and came into the most intimate relations with him, which continued as long as they both lived.

It was not till he had been at Freehold several months, and had been engaged in the study of Theology, more or less, for nearly a year, that he first made a public profession of religion—of the reason of this long delay,—a period of about eleven years from the time of his hopeful conversion, I find no intimation in any memoranda that he has left, beyond an incidental reference to the fact that the world had had an undue control over him. He was received to the communion

of Dr. Woodhull's church in September, 1802; and his recorded reflections on the occasion, though brief, show that he received the ordinance with great humility, and was deeply impressed with a sense of the obligations which he then, for the first time, publicly recognized.

Mr. McDowell continued his studies under the direction of Dr. Woodhull for about two years. He placed himself under the care of the Presbytery of New Brunswick within a few weeks after he became a communicant in the church; and his examinations and trials were, from time to time, sustained, until the 25th of April, 1804, when, at a meeting of the Presbytery at Basking Ridge, he was licensed to preach the Gospel. The time of his sojourn with Dr. Woodhull seems to have passed very pleasantly as well as very profitably. He lived with him as a son with a father, not only receiving from him daily theological instruction, but gathering from his large experience and mature wisdom many maxims and principles of conduct, which had much influence on his subsequent life. While he was a most diligent student, he was very careful in the keeping of his own heart, and the culture of all the Christian graces, and especially of a habit of devotion. He availed himself of the opportunity of attending, and taking part in, the weekly religious meetings, known

as "Societies," within the limits of Dr. Woodhull's congregation; and whenever the pulpit was rendered vacant, either by the Doctor's ill health or absence from home, he uniformly took his place, by reading a sermon to the people and offering at least one of the prayers. He does not seem to have allowed himself much time for relaxation, and yet he sometimes went a hunting, and on one occasion went with a party, in pursuit of a panther, as they supposed; but if the creature had any other existence than in the imaginations of his hunters, he was shrewd enough to keep out of their way. In one or two instances, he joined in the innocent sports of the young people into whose company he was thrown; but he seems, upon reflection to have regarded it as a matter of at least questionable propriety, especially in consideration of its being known that he was preparing for the ministry. Both in a religious and a social point of view, he commended himself strongly to the people among whom he lived, while he, in turn, contracted among them many strong and enduring friendships.

Mr. McDowell preached his first sermon at Kingston, in the neighbourhood of Princeton, in the pulpit of the Rev. David Comfort; and was not a little encouraged by the favour with which his services

were received. The Sabbath following he preached at Lamington, to the congregation among whom he had spent all his early years; but, instead of being embarrassed from his near relation to them, he accounted it a high privilege that he was permitted to proclaim to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. Having preached, for several Sabbaths, in neighbouring congregations, by request of their Pastors, he spent a month, by appointment of Presbytery, preaching to vacant congregations and in destitute places, in the Northern part of New Jersey, and the adjoining parts of Northampton county, Pa.

The Presbyterian church of Elizabethtown, N. J., was now vacant,—their late Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Henry Kollock, one of the most eloquent preachers of his day, and afterwards brother-in-law to Mr. McDowell, having been called to occupy the place both of Pastor and of Professor at Princeton. After his removal in 1803, the congregation fell into a distracted state, in consequence of a visit from the Rev. David Austin, who had preceded Dr. Kollock as their Pastor, and had closed his ministry there under very peculiar and adverse circumstances. From the time of his accession to the Pastorship of that church, in September, 1788, till about the close of 1795, he was one of the most honoured and

useful ministers in the whole region. About that time, he not only adopted the doctrine of Christ's personal appearance and reign on earth, which is accepted by many at the present day, but went so far as to fix the very day, (the fourth Sabbath of May, 1796,) in which the glorious descent should be made. When the day came and passed without any unusual occurrence, his friends hoped that the disappointment would dissipate the delusion; but, instead of that, he readily found reasons for his Lord's delaying his coming, and became more enthusiastic in his adherence to his favourite theory than ever. Not a small number, both in his own congregation and the surrounding country, adopted his views, and were waiting in full expectation of seeing the heavens open and the Son of Man descend. In this state of things, the Presbytery, by request of a majority of the congregation, interposed and dissolved the pastoral relation; whereupon Mr. Austin returned to his native State,—Connecticut.

After the congregation became vacant by the removal of Dr. Kollock to Princeton, Mr. Austin returned to visit his former charge, and became engaged, in compliance with the expressed wish of a majority of the people, to preach for them three months. At the end of that time, a vigorous effort was made to continue

his services; but it was decided, at a large congregational meeting, by a majority of one vote, not to renew the engagement. Those who wished to retain him, then withdrew in a body, and hired the Methodist church for Sabbath afternoons and evenings, and engaged Mr. Austin to preach for them six months.

Such was the state of things when Mr. McDowell first went to Elizabethtown. He had received an invitation to visit the North Dutch church in Albany, then vacant by the removal of the Rev. Mr. Johnson; and he was actually travelling on horseback, on his way thither. The Sabbath before he set out on his journey, he preached at Bedminster, where some one told him, during the interval of public service, that he had learned, from one of the elders of the church at Elizabethtown, that he was expected to preach there on the succeeding Sabbath. Notwithstanding this information was positively false, it gave a complexion to the whole of his future life. He immediately resolved to take Elizabethtown on his way to Albany, and, if he were invited to preach, to remain there over the next Sabbath, and, if not invited, to proceed on his journey. When he reached Connecticut Farms, the Rev. Mr. Thompson gave him a letter of introduction to an elder in the Elizabethtown church; but, on his arrival there,

(it was on the Fourth of July,) he found the elder to whom his letter was addressed, was not at home. The keeper of the inn at which he stopped directed him to another elder, (Mr. Chandler,) to whom he showed Mr. Thompson's note, and from whom he accepted an invitation to pass the night in his family. The next morning he attended a prayer meeting, after which he was invited to stay and preach on the Sabbath. He accepted the invitation, and preached, but nearly half the pews in the house were empty, their regular occupants having been drawn off to hear Mr. Austin, who was then preaching in the Methodist church. At the close of the afternoon service, the Session communicated to him their wish that he would relinquish his purpose of going immediately to Albany, and would remain and preach for them four more Sabbaths. With this invitation also he complied; and, at the close of his engagement, a congregational meeting was held, and a unanimous call presented to him to become their Pastor. This was on the 29th of July, 1804. None of those who had withdrawn with Mr. Austin were present at the meeting.

After preaching another Sabbath, he left Elizabethtown, and, by appointment of Presbytery, spent several weeks, preaching in the Pines of Monmouth County.

In the beginning of October, he procured a dismission as a licentiate from the Presbytery of New Brunswick, and placed himself under the care of the Presbytery of New York. This Presbytery then embraced the city of New York and vicinity, and East Jersey, as far West as the Raritan River, and as far North as the Northern line of the State. The call having been accepted, the Presbytery fixed, as the time of his ordination and installation, the 26th of December following. Accordingly, on that day, the solemn service was performed. The Rev. Dr. Amzi Armstrong, Pastor of the church in Mendham, N. J., preached the sermon; Dr. McWhorter, Senior Pastor of the church in Newark, presided, and gave the Charge; and Dr. Griffin, Junior Pastor of the same church, delivered the Address to the People. On the evening of the same day that Mr. McDowell was ordained, Mr. Austin preached his Farewell Sermon to the portion of the congregation by whom he had been employed.

## CHAPTER II.

### His Ministry at Elizabethtown.

The circumstances in which Mr. McDowell commenced his ministry, though, in some respects, highly auspicious, were, in others, fitted to awaken apprehension and anxiety. The congregation had a deservedly high reputation, not only from the many worthy and distinguished families which had helped to constitute it in successive generations, but also from its having had among its ministers several of the acknowledged Lights of the Church;—men of even transatlantic fame; but, at this period, the spirit of bitter strife was dominant among them, and nearly half the legitimate members had put themselves into an attitude of ecclesiastical revolt. Then again, notwithstanding Mr. McDowell had had the advantage of a thorough education, both classical and theological, he had not had the advantage of any experience in his profession, nor had he, at the time of his ordination, a single sermon which the congregation had not already heard; while yet the large amount of pastoral labour that devolved upon him, seemed to leave him with too little time to

prepare two sermons for the Sabbath, and the distracted state of the people called for all the wisdom which could have come in the train of the most mature experience. And to crown all, he was the immediate successor of a man who, for attractive manners, fine social and pastoral qualities, and powers of pulpit eloquence, had probably no superior in the Presbyterian Church. When he came, in after life, to review the several circumstances, which seemed to render his duty so arduous and his prospects so doubtful, he was almost ready to charge himself with presumption for having ventured upon so important and difficult a field. In the result, however, he found all the evidence he could desire that, in accepting this charge, he was led by a kind and gracious hand.

Scarcely had Mr. McDowell assumed his pastoral charge before it became unmistakably manifest that he subscribed *ex animo* to the doctrine,—as popular as it is scriptural,—that "it is not good for man to be alone." From the very brief record he has left of the manner of spending his time at this period, it is evident that, sometime before his ordination, he was sensible of something like a magnetic power emanating from the dwelling of Mr. Shephard Kollock, a worthy and highly respectable citizen of the place; and, upon

closer examination, it appears no less evident that this power was concentrated in the attractions of his daughter Henrietta. After a while, we find a modest intimation that the parents have been consulted on the delicate subject, and are left to infer the result of the interview from the fact that, almost immediately after, the day for the wedding was fixed upon. That the proposed connection was every way agreeable to the family of the young lady, may be inferred from the following letter, addressed to Mr. McDowell, by her brother, the Rev. Dr. Henry Kollock, shortly after the engagement took place.

PRINCETON, *January* 12, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR:

Anxious as I am for the happiness of my sister, it gives me no small pleasure to find that she will have an amiable and pious man for her friend and protector. My consent to her union is most cheerfully given, and my best wishes will ever attend you. The quarterly examination will be concluded before the day you have appointed, and I shall, Providence permitting, be with you. If it would be equally agreeable to my sister, I would rather be a spectator than perform the ceremony. I suffered so much in marrying Mary that I resolved never more to perform the ceremony for one of my sisters. If, however, Henrietta persists in her wishes, I shall gratify them, though, perhaps, to spare the feelings of both of us, it would be better to get one of our neighbouring brethren.

I shall not forget that your communication was made in confidence. No one but Mrs. K. has been made acquainted

with the contents of your letter. Believe me to be, with affection and esteem,

H. KOLLOCK.

The time appointed for the wedding was the 5th of February, 1805; and, accordingly, on that day, the marriage was duly solemnized by the bride's brother, Dr. Kollock. Their wedding tour was limited to a short trip to his native place; whence, after spending two or three days in visiting his parents and other friends, he returned to Elizabethtown, to resume his work with the more alacrity from having thus gained the object of his affections, in whom he was destined to find an efficient helper to the end of his journey. On the 6th of April following, they took possession of the parsonage, with devout thanksgivings to God for the manifold blessings with which their lives were crowned.

On the 10th of June of this year, he left home, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Connecticut Farms, to perform a short missionary tour in some of the more destitute parts of New Jersey. During the ten days that he was absent, he visited nearly as many towns, preaching, exhorting, and catechising, as he could find opportunity. In several places, the meetings which he conducted were marked by great solemnity, and attended by a manifest blessing. It is worthy of notice that, while his mind seems to have been

intensely set upon the great object of his mission, the awakening and conversion of sinners, and the spiritual growth and comfort of Christians, he still practised such rigid economy in respect to time that he devoted more or less of every day to study. Indeed, as his ministry was in its progress and at the end, so it was at its beginning,—a scene of earnest and vigorous labour, bearing directly upon the best interests not only of his own people, but of the church and the world at large.

At the very commencement of his ministry Mr. McDowell inaugurated a plan of systematic labour, including his various pastoral duties, and whatever pertained to his preparation for his public services, and, so far as was possible, the duties which grew out of his more general relations to the Church. In the progress of his ministry, this plan was of course modified by various changes of circumstances, and particularly by the widening and deepening of his own ecclesiastical influence; but, so far as its general features were concerned, it always remained the same. His congregation covered a territory of at least five square miles; and though, at the time of his ordination, nearly half of them, if not actually seceders, sustained but a dubious relation to him as a Pastor, yet, as their leader became sick of his

enterprise and finally abandoned it, they were all willing to come back, and range themselves under the old banner. The united congregation was, even at that time, one of the largest within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church; and the duties which devolved upon its Pastor were neither few nor small; but happily they had got a Pastor who shrank from no labour, no sacrifice, no self-denial, necessary to the performance of them. Besides preaching regularly in the church twice on the Sabbath, he attended a meeting in the lecture-room, or some other place, in the evening. On Wednesday evening, he statedly attended a large Bible class somewhere in the town. Thursday afternoon he spent in visiting the families, and catechising the children, in one of the country neighbourhoods belonging to the congregation; and in the evening he preached in the same neighbourhood. On Friday evening, he uniformly preached in the lecture-room. In addition to these duties, besides visiting the sick, and afflicted, and inquiring, he, at stated periods, made a strictly religious visit, accompanied by an elder, to every family in his congregation. This, in connection with his diversified engagements of a more public nature, constituted his ordinary routine of duty during the whole period of his ministry at Elizabethtown.

Within a few months after his settlement, he was applied to, to baptize a child whose parents were not in the communion of the church. After a careful examination of the subject, he had arrived at the conclusion that a public profession of religion on the part of the parents was the only scriptural condition on which their children could be admitted to Baptism. In accordance with this conviction he felt constrained to decline the request; though his doing so involved an infringement of the long established order of the church. The opposition to his theory he met with great firmness, and yet with great prudence; and, though the church ultimately adopted his views, and heartily concurred in his practice, the following extract of a letter from Dr. Kollock, dated "Savannah, February 26, 1807," shows that this revolution in public sentiment was not easily or hastily effected.

"I am very sorry to learn, by a letter from Dr. Rodgers, that there was likely to be great difficulty in your congregation on the question concerning Baptism. Write to me particulars on this subject. I wish we could think alike on this point; and I cannot but think that if we and our Sessions were more faithful in performing our duty towards baptized persons, there would be much less dispute who have a right to the ordinance. Old Dr. Mather has a remark that deserves the attention of all clergymen: 'It is,' says he, 'a zealous and diligent attendance to discipline, according to the rules

of Christ, and not contracting the covenant, that will keep churches pure. There are two ways practised by man in order to keep churches pure—the one human, the other Divine. The human way is to straiten the grace of the Lord's covenant—the Divine way is faithfully to attend to discipline. Now it will be found, in the issue, that the Divine way only is that which will attain the end.' By adopting this 'Divine way' baptism, the happiest effects would be produced, and the Church would act in consistence with her real character of mother of the children whom she receives into her bosom. This idea,—that the Church becomes the mother of baptized children, is, I think, indubitable; and, if so, from the faith and engagements of the Church, children have a right to this ordinance. I wish you would weigh this consideration—it appears to me of no small consequence in this controversy. Without taking this ground, it will be difficult to defend the validity of the baptisms of the greater part of Christians. If having faith in the parents is a necessary prerequisite to the baptism of children, then those children are not baptized whose parents were not endowed with saving faith at the time of the administration of this rite—and thus, at one stroke, you unbaptize the majority of Christendom. Our Catechism also certainly was intended to speak a language very different from your practice. We are there told that the children of all who are members of the visible Church are to be baptized—now who are the members of the visible Church? Are they only those who are in communion? We are taught differently by the Scotch Directory, which is certainly the best Commentary on the Catechism as far as it will apply: 'Children, by baptism,' it asserts, 'are received into the bosom of the visible Church.' It necessarily follows, from this remark, that the composers of the Scotch Directory, a number of whom were members of the Westminster Assembly, did not, by the visible Church, mean the communicants alone. Besides,

you suppose baptism to be a confirmatory seal to infants—of what? Not that they shall actually enjoy the blessings of the covenant,—for it is affixed to many who never do enjoy them, and God's seal is never delusive. It must then be a confirmation of the willingness of God to bestow these blessings upon these infants. Are we authorized to deny this confirmatory token to those on whom the Scriptures declare God is willing to confer these blessings?

"These are a few of my ideas on this subject, which I have hastily thrown together. Mr. Thompson, of Connecticut Farms, has a Defence of the Presbyterian Discipline, written by Rutherford, in which you will see what has been the practice of our Church. I do not recollect the precise title of the work—you will find in it, however, a chapter on this subject."

In the winter and spring of 1806, Mr. McDowell's health, owing to the overtasking of his energies by physical and mental labour, had so perceptibly declined that it was thought expedient that he should suspend his labours for a while, and give himself to rest and relaxation. Accordingly, he left home about the close of April, in company with his neighbour, the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) Asa Hillyer, of Orange, with a view to make a journey into New England. The details of this journey are all preserved in letters of the most familiar kind, which he wrote almost daily to Mrs. McDowell. It may not be amiss to insert two or three of them, which may serve as a specimen of the whole.

Stamford, Conn., *Thursday Evening, May* 1, 1806.

My dear Henrietta:

I resume the agreeable employment of epistolary conversation with the object of my supreme earthly affection. We set out this morning, after breakfast, from Harlem.. I rode on leisurely to New Rochelle, ten miles, and there stopped for two hours. The infamous Tom Paine resides in this village, and lodges at present at the tavern where we stopped. As he was not in, we walked to another tavern to which we were told he had gone, on purpose to see him ; but he was engaged with a gentleman in a private room, so that we were not gratified by a sight of this revolting curiosity.

From New Rochelle we proceeded on to Rye, eight miles, where we dined. Leaving Rye, we crossed the line into Connecticut, and rode on to Greenwich, and called for a few minutes on Dr. Lewis, the minister of the parish. This stage is six miles from our last. From Greenwich we passed on six miles further, to Stamford, a pleasant village where we lodge to-night. We are in agreeable quarters, at the house of Mr. Smith, the clergyman of the parish. The country through which we have come to-day is naturally very rough and hilly. However, we have had a turnpike road to travel on ; and the country is in a state of improvement which I could scarcely have thought attainable, considering its natural roughness. What added much to the pleasantness of the ride was the prospect of the Sound, and of Long Island beyond it, the greater part of the way. I have endured the journey to-day much better than I did yesterday ; and am already sensibly stronger than when I set out from home. I am considerably fatigued this evening, but hope to be able to tell you to-morrow morning that I feel better after the rest of the night.

*Friday morning.*

It is as I expected—the repose of the night has refreshed and invigorated me to proceed on the journey. But I will not close my letter until we reach our next stage.

NORWALK, 2 *o'clock.*

We have ridden this forenoon ten miles. The first two days, Mr. Hillyer took me on farther than my strength would warrant; but to-day he has allowed me to have the control. We are now at the house of Dr. Burnett, son-in-law to Dr. Roe, where we arrived at twelve. We have just risen from the dinner table, and shall presently pursue our journey. This forenoon we called at Middlesex, at the house of Dr. Mather, half way between Stamford and this place. Dr. Mather is in his eighty-eighth year, and preaches yet twice on the Sabbath. He told us he had been the minister of Middlesex sixty-four years. The country through which we have travelled to-day is not unlike that which we had previously found, almost from our leaving New York—the fences are nearly all of them stone walls. We are still in sight of the Sound, and shall be till we reach New Haven, where we hope to spend the next Sabbath. I shall not close this till we arrive at the next post-town.

FAIRFIELD, 5 *o'clock.*

We have had a pleasant ride from Norwalk to this place, which is the most delightful village I have seen since I left New York. We passed through Saugatuck, a pleasant little village, about six miles back. The country, as we have advanced in this direction, has become much more level, and more free of stones. You will be glad to know that I feel very comfortable. Do not fail to write me on Monday, and direct your letter to Hartford, Conn.

With the warmest affection,

Your husband,

J. McDOWELL.

The following is the next letter, written three days later, and dated

New Haven, *Monday morning, May, 5th.*

My dear Henrietta :

I will begin where I left off Friday evening. We rode from Fairfield four miles to Bridgeport,—a pleasant, flourishing, commercial town on the Sound. Here we lodged at the house of Mr. Waterman, the clergyman, who you remember called upon us last spring on his return from the General Assembly.

In the morning I did not feel quite so well as I had done for a day or two preceding. At ten we resumed our journey, passed through the pleasant village of Stratford, and came to Milford, nine miles from Bridgeport. Here we stopped and dined with Mr. Pinneo, the clergyman of the place. His church is three stories high, and has two galleries, one above the other. From Milford we rode on to New Haven, nine miles, where we arrived before five. I felt greatly fatigued, and much in need of a day of rest.

The country through which we passed from Norwalk to this place is very pleasant. New Haven is, without exception, in my opinion, the handsomest town I ever saw. The City Green in front of the College is surpassingly beautiful. The buildings in general throughout the city, so far as I have seen, are in a superior style of excellence. Coming into the city on Saturday evening, I was much charmed with what was to me a very great curiosity,—a balloon ascending through the air. It continued to ascend for about a quarter of an hour, and then as gradually descended until it came in contact with the ground. Whether there was any one in it or not I cannot say. We were at the distance of nearly two miles.

The Sabbath began here at sunset on Saturday evening. We have lodged with Mr. Stuart, whom you saw with Mr. Griffin at Elizabethtown. On Sabbath forenoon, we heard Dr. Dwight preach in the College chapel. He is a most delightful, instructive preacher. We had an opportunity of communing with them in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. On Saturday afternoon I went to hear Mr. Merwin preach, and Mr. Hillyer went to hear Mr. Stuart, both young men lately settled here. I felt yesterday, and still feel this morning, incomparably more comfortable, and have certainly gained considerable strength since I came to New Haven. Until yesterday, I have scarcely been able to walk a hundred yards, or to ascend a flight of stairs, without being much fatigued; but now I can walk much faster and farther, almost without being sensible of any fatigue at all. My cough has almost entirely left me.

Mr. Hillyer and myself have as yet withstood all solicitations to preach. We are to set out this morning to visit Mr. Hillyer's friends, and hope to arrive there to-morrow. As our journey will take us off from the main post-road, I cannot say when I shall be able to write again—perhaps not before Thursday, at Hartford, where we intend to be at Election. There I expect to have the happiness of receiving a letter from my dear wife. I cannot tell you where to direct another letter to me, as we have not yet determined upon our course from Hartford. Remember me affectionately to all friends. May the Lord take care of you is the daily prayer of your affectionate husband, JOHN McDOWELL.

The next day after this letter was written, our travellers proceeded Northward, and their first stopping place was at Cheshire, where they dined with the Rev. Mr. Foote, whom Mr. McDowell represents as so unceremonious in his hospitality that he led their horses

into the stable, fed and curried them, and bestowed every possible attention upon both the horses and their riders till they were ready to proceed on their journey. Their next stopping place was at Granby, (Turkey Hills,) where they had an opportunity of visiting Newgate, which was then the State Prison of Connecticut. Mr. McDowell explored every part of this dismal abode of the guilty, descending seventy-five feet, to the bottom of the prison, where his sympathies were awakened in no small degree, by finding one of the miserable inmates, alone, and in chains, amidst that deep darkness. From Granby he proceeded to Hartford, and reached there on the morning of the day of the General Election. Here he had his curiosity gratified by witnessing the splendid procession, the military parade, and all the ceremonies attendant on the Inauguration of the newly chosen Governor and Lieutenant Governor. He heard the Sermon also, known as the "Election Sermon," by the Rev. Dr. William Lyman, which he seems to have thought very creditable to the Congregational pulpit of Connecticut. He dined with the clergy, (at least a hundred), and, to his great surprise, found himself, at the dinner-table, sitting by the side of his old friend and predecessor, David Austin. He encountered Dr. Strong, the well known Pas-

tor of the First church in Hartford, it would seem in one of his more jocose moods; for the Doctor, instead of inviting him to stay over the Sabbath and preach for him, invited him to stay and go to the theatre with him; the meaning of which was that his congregation, being temporarily without a church edifice, had engaged the theatre for their Sunday services. After lingering a little in the neighbourhood of Hartford, and making some very pleasant acquaintances, he proceeded North to Springfield, and thence to Northampton, stopping in each place long enough to see whatever was of special interest to him. From Northampton he passed on to New Lebanon Springs, and thence to Sheffield, where he ventured to preach once on the Sabbath, experiencing no ill effects, and, a few days later, was safely landed at his own home, with his health so much invigorated by his journey that he was able gradually to resume his accustomed labours.

In August, 1807, he was greatly encouraged in his work by being permitted to witness the commencement of an extensive and powerful revival of religion. The first decisive evidence of any unusual manifestation of Divine influence was in connection with a very impressive sermon on Prayer, preached by the Rev. Dr. Gideon Blackburn. The special seriousness, originating at that

time, increased in every part of the congregation, until there were comparatively few who remained indifferent. This state of things continued for about eighteen months; and the number added to the communion of the Church, as the fruit of this revival, was about a hundred and twenty. Most of them were very deeply and powerfully exercised before they were brought to indulge a hope in God's forgiving mercy. It was the first scene of the kind in which Mr. McDowell ever mingled; and, while he conducted it with great wisdom and carefulness, it gave a fresh impulse to his zeal and fidelity, and had no doubt an important bearing upon the success of his subsequent labours. This revival extended not only through his own congregation but into other congregations in the neighbourhood, until almost every congregation in what was then the Presbytery of Jersey had received a gracious visitation.

In the winter immediately succeeding his ordination, he received overtures from the North Dutch Church in Albany in reference to a settlement among them; but he declined them without even taking any time to consider their claims. The first call which he received was from the Collegiate Dutch Church in New York, in the spring of 1809. Dr. Abeel, one of the Associate Pastors, went to Elizabethtown on Saturday, intending,

without being recognized, to hear Mr. McDowell preach on the Sabbath. The attempt, however, proved abortive. At the inn at which he stopped, he found himself exceedingly annoyed by the gathering of the young people for a dance on Saturday evening; and so incongenial did the place become to him that he left it in disgust, and, as it turned out, sacrificed the object of his visit, by seeking a refuge at the parsonage. Mr. McDowell received him gladly, but instead of co-operating with him for the accomplishment of the object of his visit, he actually succeeded in inducing him to preach for him in the morning; and in the afternoon Dr. Abeel went to Newark to hear Dr. Griffin's Farewell Sermon; so that he returned to New York with no other report concerning Mr. McDowell than that he was a very hospitable, and apparently an excellent, minister. It seems, however, that Dr. Abeel's failure to accomplish his object did not prevent the Consistory from moving in respect to the call; and the following correspondence reveals the spirit of both parties in relation to it.

From the Rev. Dr. Livingston.

New York, *August* 5, 1809.

My dear Sir:

The same precious promises which confirm our hopes respecting our own salvation, extend to the Church of Christ, and ensure our confidence in the continued blessings of the

Lord upon Zion. All is in the hand of our Sovereign Redeemer, who bears the glory, and builds his temple, and while He executes his vast designs, renders every part, and the interests of every individual, subservient to the whole. This view of the administration of his Providence not only seems to inspire us with adoration and joy, but, when applied to his dealings with us, is calculated to quiet our minds, to silence our objections, and produce a cheerful acquiescence in his holy will. The Lord reigneth: and it is well for the Church, for the world, for ourselves, that He is upon the throne. He appoints our lot without our advice; determines our work antecedent to our requests; and assigns us our place contrary to our expectations, and often beyond our most sanguine wishes. Let the wicked rage and strive to break their bonds, they know not what they do. But all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious and submitted to his blessed yoke, will cheerfully acknowledge his right to dispose of them, and resign their own choice and plans to his counsel and direction, as far as that can be ascertained. It must be so—grace always produces this. Every sincere disciple of Jesus, and especially every faithful minister, when rightly exercised, will desire to exclaim with the Prophet, "Here am I, send me;" and when the Master shall please to remove all doubts and difficulties in the path of duty, and shall say "Go," will confidently commit the work, and the whole train of consequences, into his hand, and cheerfully follow the Lamb whithersoever He shall lead them. Excuse, my dear Sir, these sentiments which flow spontaneously as a pleasing prelude to what I wish to communicate. I love to think and speak honourably of our Divine Lord. I love to trace his footsteps in the sanctuary, and to recommend Him to the confidence and affection of all his servants. You do the same; and these views of his wisdom, faithfulness and power will

prepare you to attend to his dealings with respect to yourself, and I hope convince you of present duty, and enable you to know the voice of the Divine Shepherd, and animate you with courage and zeal to fulfil his command.

Our friend, Mr. Nixen, who has taken up the cross many years ago, and is by us numbered among those who love the Lord, will tell you that the hearts of all our Consistory were suddenly, and, even while deliberating upon other men, unexpectedly turned towards you. The discouragements you had before given seemed to have stifled the hope of obtaining you, and rendered it necessary to think upon others. When, overruled, as it were, of the Lord, notwithstanding all these discouragements, the whole Board were unanimously impressed with a resolution to call you, knowing that your heart and all events were at his disposal, the Consistory, I trust in faith, in hope, and in love, have looked up to the Head of the Church, over all the mountains in the way, and committed the issue into his hand, who has often helped us with choice instruments, and who, we believe, will also add you as a blessing to us.

This, according to our constitution, has been laid before our Great Consistory, and they all most cordially approve of our choice. There is not a dissenting voice : The old and the young unite in the invitation. All cry out,—"Come over and help us." You know you will be sweetly welcome to your colleagues. Dr. Abeel will rejoice to have you with him in the work ; and be assured I will embrace you with an affectionate heart and love you fervently.

A more attentive, loving and quiet people than ours are not to be found in all the churches. I have served them thirty-nine years—from my youth to advanced age I have been with them. I know them ; I love them ; and have cause to speak well of them ; and when we part, I will leave my blessing upon them, and expect to meet many of them in glory.

We lament the loss your present people will sustain—but what shall we say? What can be done? The state of society, and the wants and perilous situation of the churches, render such steps unavoidable. They are practised every where in Europe; they are frequent in America; and must not excite any unpleasant feelings among dear brethren and fellow Christians. "It is the Lord! let Him do what seemeth Him good."

Now, my dear Brother, the Lord will assuredly show you what you are to do. I should be happy to see you, but do not know when I can call upon you. I will meet you every day at the throne of grace. I bless you, and am, with sincere regard,

Your most affectionate,

J. H. LIVINGSTON.

Two days after the date of the preceding letter, Dr. Livingston addressed another communication to Mr. McDowell, urging still further his acceptance of the call, and mentioning incidentally that the salary which had been voted him was twenty-five hundred dollars, which, with the many valuable perquisites he would receive, was thought to be a very generous compensation. To these letters Mr. McDowell returned the following answer.

ELIZABETHTOWN, *August* 8, 1809.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

I had fondly hoped to escape the trial to which I learn from your letters that I am called. Happily and comfortably settled among the people of my present charge; made, in

some measure, useful among them; and cherishing towards them an ardent affection, I had hoped, and expected, and resolved to spend my days with them, and mingle my dust with theirs; and, therefore, I have heretofore, uniformly and immediately, on a proposal for a removal being made to me, declined it. This I did when the proposal was first made by individuals of your church. When Mr. D—a, a few Sabbaths since, intimated to me that your church would still probably make out for me a call, notwithstanding all the discouragements, I was not a little surprised, and felt it my duty to be silent, and watch more carefully the leadings of Providence on this subject—I viewed it in a more momentous aspect than I had done before, and came to the determination to put myself unreservedly at the Divine disposal, and to endeavour to ascertain his will, and to obey it, however it might contravene my most cherished plans and hopes.

Your letter, my dear Sir, places this subject before me in a still more solemn and impressive manner. I can say nothing at present as to the result of your call; but if it should not be in accordance with the wishes of your people, I pray that I may not, in any way, needlessly wound the feelings of those who have manifested such undue partiality towards me.

You inquire as to the regular course to be pursued as it respects the judicatory of the church to which I belong. The call must come through Presbytery before it can regularly come into my hands for decision. I believe it would be indelicate for me to ask a meeting of Presbytery for the purpose. Your Consistory would be the proper body to do that; and the regular mode is as follows:— You must draw up a letter addressed to the Moderator. This letter must be signed by two Ministers of the Presbytery, and two Elders,—the Elders belonging to different congregations. On such a request coming to the Moderator, he is obliged, according to the constitution of our Church, to convene the Presbytery accordingly. Dr. Roe, of Woodbridge, is our Moderator.

But, Dear Sir, I doubt whether the calling of an extra meeting will much expedite the issue of this business. I must have time to watch the movements of Providence, and make up my own mind. Our regular meeting will be on the first Tuesday of October, at Springfield. And should the call be presented then, nothing more can be done, unless the people of my charge concur, than to put the call into my hands and cite the congregation to appear by their Commissioners, at the next meeting of Presbytery, to show cause, if any they have, why I should not be removed. This meeting may be in ten days after such citation.

But if your Consistory would rather there should be a special meeting called, I have no objections ; and perhaps there would be these advantages in it ; that the members of Presbytery, having the subject before them, might be maturing their judgment in the case, or preparing to make a decision, if they should be asked so to do. It would place the business in a still more solemn manner before me; and Commissioners from my congregation might be present at the stated meeting, and thus the matter be then decided. I leave the whole business to your own judgment. I hope and pray that the Lord may direct me. Again, my dear Sir, I ask your prayers. From your affectionate young friend,

JOHN McDOWELL.

The following letter from Mr. McDowell, bearing date a few days later than the preceding, and addressed to two prominent members of the Consistory, (Messrs. Nixen and Duryea), shows how deeply the people of Elizabethtown were exercised in view of the possibility of losing their Pastor, and how intensely his mind also was exercised on the same subject.

Elizabethtown, *August* 22, 1809.

My Dear Friends :

Since I was in New York last week, I have passed through a scene of trial which I can scarcely describe to you. The subject of your call has occupied my mind, whether sleeping or waking. On Tuesday of last week, I communicated it to my Session ; and it seemed greatly to distress them. Directly after it became public in the congregation, and has occasioned a great deal of anxiety and distress. And there has scarcely been an hour of the day since, but I have had persons calling upon me, and expressing the warmest affection, deprecating the consequences of my removal, and imploring me to make up my mind to remain with my present charge. Although I knew my people were attached to me, I had no idea of the strength of their affection ; and though I had before felt that a separation would be to me a great trial, I did not anticipate that it would be such a rending of my very heart-strings as I now perceive it must be. I have endeavoured carefully to look at the subject in all its bearings—it has seldom been out of my mind for a moment —and I cannot, as yet, see any indication of Providence that it is my duty to relinquish my present charge. But, on the contrary, every day it appears more and more plainly my duty to continue where I am. The strong attachment of my people to me as well as mine to them ; the probable evils which a separation might bring upon them ; the willingness which they have always manifested, and which they now increasingly manifest, to minister to my temporal comfort ; the advice of my brethren around me, so far as I have been able to obtain it ; the extensiveness of the field which I now occupy, and the evidence I have that my labours here have not been in vain—these and other considerations incline me strongly to the belief that it is my duty to remain here. My people, in order that their minds may be relieved from painful suspense, are urging me to a speedy decision

—I have, therefore, on mature consideration, thought it advisable to suggest to you whether it would not be best to stop the call before it proceeds any farther. But still, as I have pledged myself to you to take this matter into serious consideration, and have formerly even expressed a wish that I might have till October to deliberate, I am still willing, if you wish it, that the call should come before Presbytery next week, and I will at any time give an answer, or keep it till the stated meeting in October, and will continue to endeavour carefully to watch the indications of Providence, and, if, within that time, I should become convinced that it is my duty to go to you, I will certainly go. But from every thing that I can see at present, I believe I shall still stay where I am. Hence I should prefer that the call should be arrested, and prosecuted no further. At the time the call was made out, I felt that it was a business of such a solemn nature that I was bound to make it a subject of solemn consideration. I was not without painful apprehension that, in opposing the private overtures which had been made to me, I might have resisted the will of God; hence I was brought to a stand, and did not forbid you to proceed. But if I had felt then as I do now, I should certainly have endeavoured to save you all the trouble to which you have since been subjected.

Let me have your answer to this as soon as possible, that I may know what course to pursue with my people,—whether still to keep them in suspense, or announce to them that the business is ended. May the Lord bless your church, and speedily send you a Pastor after his own heart. Yours, most affectionately, J. McDOWELL.

The following from Dr. Livingston to Mr. McDowell, while it shows a greatly diminished confidence in the result of the application, shows an interest in it not at all abated, and is alike creditable to both of them

New York, *September* 9, 1809.

Rev. and Dear Sir :

The candour and confidence evinced in your last communication recommend you to my esteem and enhance my respect and affection for you. I know how to sympathize under the conflict of contending motives, and am no stranger to the painful apprehensions which perplex the mind, when interesting events are immediately depending upon our own determination. But you must excuse me for declining the painful and improper task of making any observations upon what you have suggested. I am confident of your sincerity, and know you wish unreservedly to discover and fulfil the pleasure of your Lord. Be encouraged to acknowledge Him alone, and cast your burthen upon Him. He will direct, and enable you with clearness and firmness to decide upon this interesting subject. And I most sincerely hope that nothing may be ever experienced hereafter that will prompt the wish that another conclusion had been formed.

Agreeably to your request, I have communicated your letter to the Consistory. We can only repeat what we have already often mentioned—that, as we sought direction of the Lord, and were unanimous in our determination to call you, so we have, in his fear, faithfully accomplished whatever we can do : and now, in a humble dependence upon his sovereign and merciful dispensation, we leave the event with Him, and patiently await the result. We cannot, therefore, consent to withdraw the call, or, by any act of ours, relinquish our claim upon you. It is with you to determine what shall be the issue.

Perhaps some change in your views may succeed. Perhaps some unforeseen circumstances, in the course of Divine Providence, may occur. But if, after a sufficient pause, when you again calmly review the whole case, and impartially explore the inevitable consequences in all their various bearings, you are still of the same mind, and if you still judge

that your removal would have an unhappy influence upon the interests of religion,—if it would indeed be "violating your conscience, and acting in direct opposition to the will of God clearly manifested by his Providence;" and if these conclusions will certainly be the result of your most serious and protracted deliberations, then the matter is decided. You have it, therefore, unquestionably in your power to determine and close the whole business whenever and in what manner you please, and we shall and must of course acquiesce in the event.

Accept of the assurance of my kindest regard. That the blessing of the Lord may rest abundantly upon you and yours, is the fervent prayer of,

My dear Sir,
Your affectionate friend and brother in Christ,
Our precious Redeemer,
J. H. LIVINGSTON.

Six days after the date of this letter, Mr. McDowell put an end to the negotiation by returning a negative answer to the call. Whereupon, the congregation, by a most respectable committee, testified their grateful approval of his decision, by addressing to him the following note.

Dear Sir: In behalf of the First Presbyterian congregation in Elizabethtown, and agreeably to their instructions, we take great pleasure in expressing, in their name, their entire and unanimous approbation to you of the manner in which you have treated, and finally answered, the application which has been made to you for a removal from us, agreeably to the written communications which have been laid before them.

And we are further authorized and instructed to declare to you, in the name of the congregation, that this additional and renewed instance of your attachment to them, and of your affection for this people, among whom you have so worthily officiated for some years past, as our Pastor and spiritual guide, is fully reciprocated on our part.

JONATHAN DAYTON,
MOSES C. CHANDLER,
WILLIAM SHUTE,
AARON OGDEN.

To the Rev. JOHN McDOWELL.

The very next week after he declined the call from the Dutch Church, he received one from the Brick (Presbyterian) Church in the same city; and, as his reasons for declining the one call were known, a very elaborate communication was addressed to him, designed to convince him that those reasons were not applicable to the other. The reasoning, however, did not produce the desired effect—he was disposed to decline the call without even allowing it to come before Presbytery; but, by the urgent request of the church, he finally yielded his objections, and the Presbytery decided against his removal.

About this time, (September, 1809,) Mr. McDowell was greatly tried by the getting up of a Horse Race by some persons from the city of New York, in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. When he became

apprized of what was on foot, he was greatly distressed at the prospect of the evil consequent upon such a scene to the morals of the community, and set himself to do his utmost to prevent it. He went to Mr. Kollock, his father-in-law, who was a magistrate in the town, and asked him if the civil authorities would not interfere to stop the races; and his answer was that they could do nothing. Mr. McDowell, disappointed, but not disheartened, replied,—"Well, if human help fails, I will seek help from a Higher Power." He immediately convened the Session of his church; and they appointed the Tuesday following to be observed as a day of fasting and prayer to God that he would avert the threatened evil. On the intervening Sabbath, he delivered a most solemn discourse on the text,—"Cry aloud and spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the House of Jacob their sins;" and most fully did he enter into the spirit of his text. After having exhibited with great boldness and plainness the sins connected with and consequent upon this criminal practice, he concludes the discourse by the following appeal to persons of different characters and classes.

"1. Permit me to address those present who move in the higher walks of life. You have influence—your opinions and

your example have great weight. Let me earnestly exhort you seriously to consider this subject. Take a view of the crimes openly practising among us—consider their dangerous influence on the interests of religion, morality and civil order; and especially their demoralizing influence on the young. And let me earnestly entreat you to frown upon these things—do not sanction them by your presence—keep at a distance from them—bear your testimony against them—and use your influence and exertions to suppress them. Acting thus, you will have the sweet felicity of the approbation of your own consciences—you will deserve well of your country—the blessing of the virtuous and pious will rest upon you—their prayers will be offered up for the blessing of Heaven upon you and yours; and future generations will rise up and call you blessed.

"2 Permit me, in view of this subject, to say a word to Magistrates. I will not undertake to point out to you your duty on this occasion, as civil officers—you know this better than I can tell you. I would only remind you that you *are ordained of God*, (Rom. XIII, 1,) and ordained *for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well*, (1 Pet. II, 14.) You are accountable to God for the faithful discharge of your duty in your office; and see to it that you keep consciences void of offence.

"3. I would call upon the whole of this congregation to set their faces against this wickedness. It is disgraceful to the town you live in. It is introducing a flood of vice among you. In its tendency, it is destructive of your souls, and the souls of your children. It is a large link in the chain of those causes which, without deep repentance, will sooner or later, bring down the judgments of God upon us—and perhaps those exterminating judgments, which He is now so awfully pouring out upon the nations of Europe for their crimes. Go

not near this scene—bear your testimony against this wickedness—use every lawful exertion to bring the authors, contrivers, and promoters of it to justice—let the public mind be against it, and be expressed—let the authors be held in abhorrence, and it will stop.

"4. Permit me to address the Young. My beloved youth, for you especially I fear and tremble on this occasion. You are to form the future members of the Church and of civil society; and the interests of both are intimately connected with the manner in which you are trained up, and the habits which you now form; yea, your own everlasting salvation is intimately connected therewith. And you are in great danger, from the scene of vice among us, of becoming corrupted and forming vicious habits. Let me most tenderly, and affectionately, and earnestly, exhort you not to go near these races. Yes, I charge you, as your minister, to keep at a distance. Avoid that place, as you would one infested with some deadly contagion. That place *is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*

5. "Parents, Guardians, Masters, I call upon you, and charge you to be faithful at this time. If you regard the favour of God, and the interests of his cause, if you regard the good of society, and especially if you regard the everlasting happiness of the souls of those under your care, be careful to restrain them from going near this scene of vice—keep them from it as you would from a place infected with the plague.

6. "People of God, I would next address you. I hope you all feel on this occasion—many of you, I know, do feel most deeply; and all of you who have grace in exercise must be sighing for these abominations. Let me exhort you, by every just mode of expression, to bear your decided testimony against these things, and show your abhorrence of

them. Be deeply humbled before God. Why has He permitted these abominations, replete with spiritual judgments, to come in upon us? Is it not for the sins of this place—for the abuse of such distinguished mercies as it has enjoyed? And have not the people of God been partakers in these abuses? Therefore let us be deeply humbled—let us mourn for our own sins, and the sins of others. Let us be much engaged in humble and earnest prayer to God. If He does not interpose, we are undone—his cause must sink in this place. He may hear us—yea, we have abundant reason to believe that, if we be in earnest, He will hear us; for He is a God who heareth prayer; and his word declares that the *effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,* (James, V, 16.) *The Lord reigneth*—He is stronger than man —*the wrath of man shall praise Him*—and He has given us encouragement to believe that *when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him*; (Isa. LIX, 19). This is our hope and joy. Let us be engaged, and we may hope that He will help, and open a door of deliverance from the dreadful effects of these abominations. And, O ye people of God—all who bear his name, *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;* (2 Cor. VI, 17). *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;* (Eph. V, 11). *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united*; (Gen. XLIX, 6.)

7. "Are there any here this day, who are the authors or promoters of this scene of wickedness, and who are determined still to persevere? Let me call upon you, and charge you to pause and consider. It may be the last call while there is hope for you. This may be the last day of God's patience; and if you proceed, you may hereby forever close the door of mercy against you. Oh, pause, before it may be forever too late. Reflect on the dreadful weight of guilt which will press upon you if you persevere. You are filling

God's people with distress—they are dear to Him—in all their afflictions He is represented as being afflicted ; (Isa. LXIII, 9). Therefore every sigh, and groan, and pain which you occasion them, will one day rise up against you—the guilt of those who may be corrupted during this scene will be laid to your charge—you will have been partakers in their sins. The sins of generations to come will be laid to your charge—and should lives be lost on this occasion, as will probably be the case, yea, one already has been lost!—and this blood crieth from the earth to Heaven against you for vengeance. You have been the occasion of shedding this blood ; and however it may be viewed in the sight of men, in the sight of God this blood will be laid to your charge. This town is defiled with blood, and you must answer for it. O what a load of guilt will press upon you—and what an awful punishment awaits you ! Once more, I beseech you, pause, consider, desist and repent. The Lord have mercy upon you, Amen."

The sermon was preached to an immense congregation. Some of those who were most prominent in the races, were among his hearers, and, with an air of defiance, took their places directly in front of him; but before the sermon was ended, they were seen to quail under his withering rebukes. The Providence of God seemed to frown upon the whole enterprise. A vast crowd assembled to witness the spectacle, and the very first course that was run, one of the riders was hurled from his horse, and precipitated into eternity. This awful calamity, however, only interrupted the races long enough for another rider to be substituted. While

the races continued they were attended in large measure, by gambling, drunkenness, and other kindred vices; but, after the lapse of a day, the leaders became alarmed, and before half the period of their intended stay had expired, they fled, leaving Elizabethtown forever. This was, undoubtedly, in some of its bearings, one of the most important incidents in Dr. McDowell's whole history—it did more to reveal his indomitable strength of purpose, his unyielding fidelity to his own convictions, than could have been effected by years spent in the ordinary routine of quiet ministerial labour.

In 1810, Mr. McDowell was appointed, with his neighbour, the Rev. James Richards, of Newark, to represent the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the General Association of New Hampshire. They left home together on the 3d of September, and were fellow travellers nearly the whole time till they returned at the close of the month. Of this tour a minute and very agreeable account is preserved in the letters addressed by Mr. McDowell to his wife, at brief intervals, during the period of his absence. As he had travelled through the greater part of this region once before, he had at least a slight acquaintance with most of the Congregational ministers; for he adhered to that good old primitive rule, so generally observed

in those days, of availing himself of the hospitality of his brethren, which no man was more ready than he to reciprocate. As New Canaan, the home of Mr. Richards' parents, was not far out of their way, they turned aside to make a short visit there ; and, though every thing pertaining to the place and the family was simple and unpretending, the cordial welcome and the genial and kindly manifestations rendered Mr. McDowell's brief stay there exceedingly agreeable to him. To those of us whose memory takes in the Congregational ministers of that generation, who lived on his route, it is a matter of no small interest to find their names recorded, in connection with incidental remarks illustrative of what we know to have been their characteristics. At New Haven he had the pleasure of spending an hour or two with Dr. Dwight, by whose fine powers of conversation and other attractive qualities he seems to have been charmed. At one of the minister's houses in Connecticut, where he stopped, he writes, in view of the state of things around him,— "You find scarcely any servants in this country—every one seems to be his own servant—there is great simplicity and equality, and at the same time great hospitality and great information." The travellers proceeded on their way together, calling upon Dr. Strong,

Dr. Yates, Dr. McClure, and divers other Congregational worthies, till they had reached Long Meadow, where Mr. Richards remained to pass the Sabbath with Mr. Storrs, (grandfather of the Rev. Dr. Storrs of Brooklyn,) and Mr. McDowell proceeded to Springfield, and stopped with Mr. Osgood, whose ministry there had commenced the year before. From Springfield they moved on to Worcester, where they had a pleasant interview with Dr. Austin, and thence proceeded to Boston, (having travelled thus far on horseback,) and, on their arrival, Mr. McDowell became the guest of Deacon Thurston, of the Park Street Church, whom he represents as living in great splendour, and occupying a house on Beacon Hill, which, for beauty of situation, was unrivalled by any thing he had ever seen or expected to see. He preached at Park Street; visited the Athenæum and various other places of public interest; and attended the Thursday Lecture, and heard a sermon from a venerable minister in Boston, long since dead, which seems to have been little suited to his taste. During his stay at Boston, he rode over to Cambridge, and took a view of the College and its surroundings, and was especially interested in seeing the ancient portraits, and the philosophical apparatus, and in passing through the library. From Boston he

went to Salem, where he stopped with the Rev. Mr. Spalding, in whose congregation there had just been a powerful revival of religion; and, while there, his friends took him over to Marblehead, which he represents, as many others have done, as a sort of episode in creation. At Ipswich he stopped long enough to visit the old burying ground, where he had great interest in examining the monuments of the early Puritans, the inscriptions upon some of which time had rendered utterly illegible. At Newburyport he preached for Dr. Spring, and was very hospitably entertained by Mr. Bartlett, the well-known benefactor of the Andover Seminary, whom he seems to have considered a very rare specimen of humanity—among other things, he states that Mr. B., about that time, had had two ships taken by the French, which were worth not less than two hundred thousand dollars; and that he did not seem to feel it more than an ordinary man would have felt the loss of twenty dollars. At Exeter, N. H., his next stopping place, was the meeting of the General Association, which it was his main object to attend. Here, on the 21st of September, he addressed the following letter to his wife.

My dear wife:

It is now noon, and the General Association have not yet risen. It is expected that they will rise this afternoon; so

that, if we had made our arrangements to reach home on Sabbath week, it would be impracticable, even if we should have good weather all the time. I long to be at home—a long distance separates us ; but I hope I shall reach you in good time, and find you all in health, and that we shall rejoice together again in the Divine goodness. We left Newburyport early Wednesday morning for this place, fifteen miles distant, and, after passing through a pleasant country, and one considerable village, (Amesbury,) we reached here at half past nine o'clock. Mr. Richards preached at eleven. The present Association is small, consisting of only fourteen members ; and only seven of these belong to New Hampshire. Two are from the General Assembly ; two from Connecticut ; two from Massachusetts ; and one from Vermont. The first day we had two sermons ; and yesterday we had three. I preached last evening. It began to rain just as we arrived here, and the rain has continued uninterruptedly ever since. If the Association rise this afternoon in time, and the weather permits, we intend to go to Portsmouth this evening,—fourteen miles. Both Mr. Richards and myself are very well. Exeter is a pleasant village, about half the size of Morristown. We expect to spend the Sabbath at Newburyport, twenty-four miles from Portsmouth, on the way to Andover and Boston. On Monday, we shall have twenty-two miles to ride to Andover. We expect to remain there over Tuesday, and on Wednesday to set our faces in good earnest towards home. The state of religion and of the churches in New Hampshire is, at this time, gloomy enough. There is, however, a revival now in progress in this town, from which happy results are anticipated. I am stopping here with Mr. Rowland, the minister of the place. Mr. Church* has just

*The Rev. Dr. Church of Pelham, who had that year been a member of the General Assembly at Philadelphia.

put into my hands the sermon he promised you. I shall close this letter at Portsmouth, if we go there to-day.

SATURDAY MORNING, *at Portsmouth.*

The Association broke up yesterday about three o'clock, and we immediately set out for Portsmouth. It is remarkable that there has been no time when we could travel, since we left home, that there has been any rain. It rained during nearly the whole time we were in Exeter, and stopped not more than ten minutes before we wished to resume our journey. We arrived here about dark. The town is about three times as large as Elizabethtown, and has a general appearance of neatness and thrift. The towns generally, throughout this region, exhibit incomparably more of wealth and elegance than our towns do. After breakfast, we shall go out and see what is to be seen, and shall cross the Piscataqua River into the District of Maine, and then direct our course towards New Jersey. We are now at the farthest point of distance which we expect to be from you. My future letters will be dated nearer and nearer home. I long to hear from you again ; but have no hope of receiving a letter until I reach Boston, which cannot be before next Wednesday. May the Lord bless you, and keep you.

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN McDOWELL.

P. S. Tell your father that, after all the triumph of the Federalists respecting the late election in this State, for members of Congress, it has just been officially announced, by the Governor and Council, who are sitting in this town, that there are two Republicans elected, and no election for the other three members.

Agreeably to the intimation in the preceding letter, they went, under the conduct of Dr. Buckminster, at

whose house they lodged, to see the lions of Portsmouth, and then crossed the Piscataqua into Maine ; and, having stood there about two minutes,—long enough to be able to say that they had been in that part of the Yankee dominion, they returned, and forthwith set their faces towards the region of the setting sun. At Hampton they passed a pleasant hour or two with the Rev. Mr. Webster, the Congregational minister of the place ; and while there, being within two miles of the celebrated Hampton Beach, they walked out thither, and were struck with awe by the roaring of the breakers, and the grandeur of the scene that opened upon them. After making another visit of a day or two at Newburyport, where they still received the most hospitable attentions, they proceeded on their way to Andover, and there attended the annual examination of the students of the Seminary, and were greatly pleased with every thing they saw and heard. They stopped with Dr. Griffin, who had been their neighbour in New Jersey, and were not a little gratified by the opportunity of renewing their intercourse with him. They found nearly sixty young men here, pursuing their theological studies under circumstances that seemed to them most auspicious. Among them were several of their own friends from New Jersey, whom they were glad to meet,

and they visited the grave of one,—Lewis Le Conte Congar, of Newark, who had died a short time before. Dr. Griffin's new house, built by Mr. Bartlett, at an expense of twenty thousand dollars, and then nearly finished, seems to have been quite an object of attraction to them. From Andover they came to Boston, and thence to Providence, where they remained only long enough to take a view of the town, when they passed on homeward through Rhode Island into Connecticut. The country between Providence and Plainfield Mr. McDowell thought was, in all respects, the most unattractive and dreary that he had ever travelled. A few days after this, an uninterrupted and successful journey brought him again to his family and his congregation, whom he met with many thanksgivings to God for his goodness, both to him and to them, during the period of their separation.

Mr. McDowell had now, for some time, had a class in his congregation, devoted to the study of the Bible and of Church History, consisting of a large portion of the youth of both sexes. The following letter addressed to them during his absence on the journey above recorded, shows the deep interest which he felt in their spiritual welfare.

FARMINGTON, CONN. *September* 7, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIENDS :

I am now separated from you about a hundred and twenty miles. My health has been uncommonly good since I left home, and I have borne the fatigues of my journey thus far much better than I had expected. I hope, through the blessing of Providence, my journey will be beneficial both to myself and my people.

I often think of you in my absence, and have no doubt you think of me, and I trust we are not unmindful of each other in our addresses at the throne of grace. I love all my people, but I hardly need tell you that to you I am particularly attached. I hope I feel sincerely grateful to God, who led me to establish the institution to which you belong ; for I am confident that it has already been highly beneficial to some of you. Knowledge is of very great importance in religion ; and I doubt whether persons grow in grace any faster than they grow in knowledge of the truths of God's word. Ignorance, so far from being the mother of devotion, has been, and still is, the parent of error and delusion ; and it is for want of knowledge, most frequently, that so many in the Christian Church, and some of them the real people of God, are so unstable, being constantly driven about by every wind of doctrine. But, my dear friends, there is danger on the other hand, against which you will need to be constantly on your guard—knowledge puffeth up—and, the more of knowledge you obtain, the more humility will you need to keep you right. Besides, you are in danger of running too deeply into speculations on Divine truth, and of seeking after explanations of those things which are above our comprehension. The Scriptures were not intended to make us philosophers, but to amend our hearts and our conduct. Let us then ever seek after Divine truth, resolved to receive it implicitly, without

being too curious to pry into those mysteries which, with our present partially developed faculties, God never intended we should understand. You have, for some time past, been studying the History of the Church. This body has been essentially the same in all ages ; and it is still the same as in the ages through whose history you have passed. It is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. Though it is now in a militant state, it will, by and by, be in a triumphant state in the Heavenly world. There it will be perfectly pure, and none will belong to it but those who have been washed from their sins in the Redeemer's blood. Let it be your care, my dear friends, that you are washed in this gracious and purifying fountain, that you may enter in through the gates into the city of the New Jerusalem, and join the General Assembly and Church of the first born. This is a precious hope ; and this hope I have reason to believe that most of you cherish. But alas ! I have to fear for some of you ; to fear that you are yet strangers to the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. The strongest wish of my heart concerning you, my dear frends, is that you may all become united to Christ by a living faith ; and being thus united to Him, I long to see you all joined to his Church in a *public* covenant. It is a painful thought to me that any one of your society, in which so much love and harmony has prevailed, and whose members have so often come together to talk about the things of the Kingdom of God, should be separated from the rest, when they go to join the happy society of the redeemed. I confess that my eyes fill with tears while I write on this subject, and think of some of you who are most amiable in your natural disposition, and yet, as I have reason to fear, strangers to the living faith in Christ. To such I would say : Give yourselves no rest until you find it in the Lord Jesus. Go to Him, and you

will find Him at once able and willing to save. Remember me, my dear friends, at the throne of grace. May the Lord be with you, and bless you with all needed temporal blessings, but, above all, may He make you the heirs of eternal life.

Your affectionate Friend and Pastor.

In 1812, the General Assembly, having determined to establish a Theological Seminary at Princeton, Mr. McDowell was chosen one of the first Directors. In 1825, he was appointed a Trustee of the same institution. Both of these offices he held till the close of life.

The next noticeable event in the history of Mr. McDowell's ministry was a revival of great power, which commenced in December, 1812. It was on a Communion Sabbath, when there had been nothing specially exciting in the preaching, and, so far as was known, no peculiar interest awakened on the part of the Church. It was not till the close of the day, when several called upon the Pastor, in great distress, to inquire what they should do to be saved, that he knew that there were any special tokens of God's gracious presence among them; though it subsequently appeared that not less than thirty who joined the church were awakened on that day. And it was a somewhat remarkable circumstance that the same powerful influence was experienced on the same day in both of the Presbyterian churches in the neighbouring town of Newark—it being Communion

season also in both those churches. This revival in Elizabethtown continued about a year, and resulted in an addition to the church of a hundred and ten members. The following is Mr. McDowell's own account of it.

"The subjects of this revival generally were deeply and long distressed, and, in many instances, their distress affected their bodily frames. Frequently sobbing aloud was heard in our meetings, and, in some instances, there was a universal trembling, and, in others, a privation of bodily strength, so that the subjects were not able to go home without help. In this respect, this revival was different from any other which I have witnessed. I never dared to speak against this bodily agitation, lest I should be found speaking against the Holy Ghost; but I never did any thing to encourage it. It may be proper here to relate one case of a young man, who was then a graduate of one of our colleges, and is now a very respectable and useful minister of Christ. Near the commencement of the revival, he was led, for the first time, reluctantly, and out of complaisance to his sister, to a meeting in a private house. I was present, and spoke, two or three times, between prayers in which some of my people led. The audience was solemn, but perfectly still. I commenced leading in the concluding prayer. A suppressed sob reached my ears—it continued and increased. I brought the prayer speedily to a close, and cast my eyes over the audience, when, behold it was this careless, proud young man, who was standing near me, leaning on his chair, sobbing and trembling in every part, like the Philippian jailor. He raised his eyes towards me, and then tottered forward, threw his arms on my shoulders, and cried out 'What shall I do to be saved?' A

scene ensued, the like of which I never witnessed. The house was full, and there was immediately, by the power of sympathy, I suppose, a universal sobbing throughout the assembly. He repeatedly begged me to pray for him. I felt so overcome with the solemnity of the scene, and fearful of the disorder which might ensue in the excited state of feeling, that I held this trembling young man for half an hour, without speaking a word. I then persuaded him to go home with me, and the audience to retire. His strength was so weakened that he had to be supported. From that hour he appeared to give his whole soul to the subject of religion. He continued in a state of deep anxiety and distress for nearly two months, when he settled down in a peaceful state of mind, hoping in the Saviour.

In October, 1814, Mr. McDowell set out on his first begging tour in behalf of the Princeton Theological Seminary. The field in which he operated was partly in New Jersey and partly in Pennsylvania; and, though he was, on the whole, very successful, he was not a little embarrassed in his movements by the threatened invasion by the British of some of the towns he had intended to visit. The following to Mrs. McDowell, dated Bridgetown, November 12, 1814, reveals at once the intense interest he felt in his object, and the unpropitious state of things under which he prosecuted it.

My Dear Wife :

You will probably be surprised, possibly rejoiced, to find that I am still in this place. When I put your letter in the

office on Thursday evening, I expected to set out for the Cape next morning in company with Mrs. Giles ; but the Cape May stage arrived shortly after, and brought me such intelligence as caused me to postpone, if not altogether relinquish, my visit there. The inhabitants were in a constant state of alarm, and frequently all were under arms. Those in the lower part were moving off their valuable effects, and some of them their families ; and the British had burnt a schooner on the beach, and had had a skirmish of an hour with our people. In this state of things, after consulting with my friends in this place, I concluded not to go. Indeed it would have been in vain as it respects my object ; for the people could not attend to it. I shall avail myself of some opportunity to come back to this place when the times become settled. My health is very good. General Giles has treated me with very great hospitality. Providence secures to me kind friends wherever I go, and I hope I may ever have a disposition to treat strangers with the same kindness that is shown to myself. I have succeeded, in respect to the object of my mission, far beyond my expectations. I have got subscribed in Woodbury 124 dollars ; in Greenwich 69 ; and Bridgeton 279 ; making a total of 472 dollars. More than 400 of this I have actually received. If every part of the Church responds as liberally as this has done, the Seminary will not want for means of support. I expect that something more will be subscribed in each of the places I have visited, by persons whom I was not able to see. Your affectionate husband, JOHN McDOWELL.

In a letter to Mrs. McDowell, written one week later, he refers again to the disturbed state of the country, and withal gives us a clue to his own political predilections.

"It was well that I did not go to Cape May. Last Saturday a number of cattle were taken off, and on Tuesday there was a severe engagement. A privateer was chased to the shore, and was run on the beach. The British barges attempted to destroy her, and the crew and the people of the Cape defended her. Our people finally succeeded in driving off the barges, and will probably get out the guns and the stores of the privateer, but the vessel will be lost. I need not suggest to you the vital importance of economy in expenditure in these embarassing and troublous times. And I fear we have not yet, by any means, seen the end of our national troubles. Our country, it appears to me, is on the brink of ruin; and I see not how either individual or national bankruptcy is to be averted, if the present ruinous measures are persevered in. And yet the people will not believe it, and apply the only remedy, which, under Providence, appears to be left for us,—giving those leaders leave to retire, who have brought us into these difficulties, and are either too weak or too wicked to change their ruinous course. The eyes of the public must eventually be opened; but I greatly fear that it will be too late to preserve the nation from ruin."

## To His Mother.

Elizabethtown, *March* 16, 1815.

My Dear Mother:

I did not hear of your illness until I heard you were getting better, else I should have gone up to see you while the travelling was yet good; and my intention now is to make you a visit as soon as the roads have become tolerable. We live, my dear mother, in a world of trial, but we are making a rapid passage through it, and shall soon bid it adieu forever. May your trials here be the means of ripening you for the future world of glory. It is a great consolation, amidst the sufferings to which we are subjected, to realize that the

Lord reigneth, and that diseases are his servants, and sent by his appointment ; and still greater to have a humble hope that this God is our Father, who knoweth what is best, and will do what is best, for us. Precious is the thought that we have an interest in the blessed promises of God's word, and that we are privileged to plead them and appropriate them to ourselves. All this, I trust, you know from happy experience. And may your knowledge of it become still more deep and experimental, until you are discharged from this state of warfare, and received where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick ; where God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain ; and where especially there shall be no more sin, which is now the Christian's greatest burden and greatest enemy. And it is a yet further precious consideration that, if we are of the people of God, our afflictions here, comparatively light and for a moment, are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

It has pleased the Lord, since I saw you, in very great mercy, to restore the blessing of peace to our land. There has been great rejoicing over the event in this part of the country, and indeed I may say in every part of it. The news first reached me on the Sabbath, between the morning and afternoon services. I announced it from the pulpit before prayer in the afternoon, and then returned thanks to God for this wonderful interposition on our behalf. It was peculiarly gratifying to me that we were in a situation in which our first feelings of joy were expressed in an offering of gratitude and praise to God in his house. And then again on the day that we received the news of the ratification from Washington, we assembled in the church at two o'clock, and renewed our thanksgivings to our Gracious Benefactor. As soon as we came out of church, the cannon was fired eighteen times ; after which the bells rung for one hour. In the evening the whole town was splendidly illuminated.

We are at present in considerable difficulty in our attempts to enforce the observance of the Sabbath. The wicked among ourselves have risen in violent opposition. What the result may be I know not ; but I trust the Lord will show us the path of duty, and give us grace to persevere in it.

Your son, JOHN McDOWELL.

The following extract of a letter from Mrs. Alfred Chester, dated June 5, 1863, presents an outline of the early history of the Sabbath School in Elizabethtown, —an institution in which, from the beginning, Dr. McDowell took the deepest interest.

" The first Sabbath School in Elizabethtown was formed in 1814. With great caution was the enterprise undertaken lest it might not be popular. A few ladies called on the parents of prominent and influential families to ascertain their opinion and secure their co-operation. Finding it met with the approbation of all classes and denominations, a Sabbath School was opened in the room now used as the Sabbath School room of the First Presbyterian Church, then occupied as a school room by Miss Gorham, the whole building being a Public Academy. At that time there were but three churches in the town ; the Presbyterian, under the pastorate of the Rev. John McDowell ; an Episcopal (St. Johns), of which the Rev. John C. Rudd was Rector ; and a Methodist, sustained chiefly by the Pastor himself,—the Rev. Thomas Morrell. The three denominations, with great harmony, commenced Sabbath School instruction under the care of the Free School Association of Elizabethtown, electing as their first Superintendent Miss Maria Smith. At the same time was commenced a Sabbath School among the coloured people, by Mr. Witherspoon, of North Carolina, then a student of Divinity under Mr. McDowell. All ages flocked to it, and

gladly improved the opportunity of gaining instruction, and several, at an advanced age, learned to read the Word of life. At the end of a year, the school at the Academy had increased so rapidly that the room was too small to accommodate all, and it was decided that each church should have its school; and with great kindness of feeling they separated, teachers and scholars going to the church and school of their own choice."

When the Spruce Street Church in Philadelphia was established, in 1815, Mr. McDowell was called to be its Pastor. He declined the call, however, as he had done those which had preceded, hoping and expecting to spend his entire ministerial life among the people who then constituted his pastoral charge.

The following letter was addressed to his brother-in-law, Mr. Shepard Kollock, then a student of Theology under the direction of his brother, Dr. Henry Kollock, at Savannah :—

ELIZABETHTOWN, *February* 5, 1815.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I ought to have written to you before this time, but the multiplicity of my engagements must be my apology. The state of religion here is much as it was when you left us ; though, if there has been any change, I hope it has been for the better. Some few are under serious impressions. The revival in Morristown is still in progress ; and in Springfield also there is now very considerable attention. You have probably heard that, since the first of January, appearances have again been very encouraging in Princeton College. The College appeared, for some weeks, to be

deeply solemn, and the serious students were calculating with much confidence on a revival ; but lately I understand the prospects have become less encouraging. The Theological Seminary is in a very flourishing state—the number of students is forty-three.

You have heard of the death of Dr. Roe, of Woodbridge, and also probably of the death of Mr. Armstrong, of Trenton. The people of Woodbridge are, I understand, to meet to-day with a view of trying the question whether they are prepared to make a call. Mr. Mills, of Morristown, I expect, will be their man. Mr. Witherspoon has been applied to with an intimation that, if he would give them encouragement, they would wait for him ; but he has put an absolute negative on their application, having his face fixed for the South. I dare not advise him to stay, though it would well agree with my feelings to have him do so. The wants of the South are much greater than those of this region.

The Sunday School establishment, in the formation of which, to your lasting honour, you had so much agency, continues to flourish. In November last, as you have probably seen in the papers, an Association was formed for the support of Sunday Schools. Among the coloured people, committing the Scriptures to memory has lately been made an exercise ; and it is truly astonishing how much some of them will recite at a single lesson. Yesterday week Mr. Palmer's Mary recited a hundred and eighty-seven verses in the Gospel by John. The Directors of the Association have established a Sunday School also for white female children. This school has five teachers, and each teacher an assistant, and it numbers a hundred and thirty scholars. Those who cannot read are taught to read ; and those who can read occupy their time in reading the Bible, and reciting the Catechism and portions of Scripture.

Your father talks seriously of removing to Carolina. When I see him set out, then I will believe he is going. I hope you

will endeavour to get back by the time of the meeting of the Presbytery, (fourth Monday in April,) that you may then be licensed.

I remain your affectionate brother,
JOHN McDOWELL.

In 1815, the General Assembly appointed agents to solicit funds in aid of the Theological Seminary. Mr. McDowell was associated in this service with the Rev. William Latta, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. They went to Philadelphia about the close of October, and remained some two weeks, confining their applications chiefly, if not entirely, to two churches in the city. From these churches they obtained 6,200 dollars, 4,200 of which were in response to the applications of Mr. McDowell. It was considered a noble contribution.

To Mr. Shepard Kollock.

Elizabethtown, *March* 11, 1816.

My dear brother,

I have received your letter and hasten to answer it. Your mother has been very ill,—at the very borders of the grave, but I am happy to inform you she is now almost entirely recovered. You have probably heard from some of the family that she fell on the kitchen piazza, and ruptured a blood vessel in her stomach. She did not apprehend any thing serious until, after some days, she was taken with raising blood in large quantities. She became, in consequence, exceedingly weak, and one night we were about her bed for several hours, under

the impression that death had actually begun its work. It has, however, pleased a kind Providence to raise her up, and we trust she may be spared a little longer to us. It is expected that she will go on with Mr. Witherspoon and his family to North Carolina, in May, and pass the summer there.

The Sunday Schools, both the black and the female, continue and flourish. You have probably seen that they have become quite engaged in this business in New York. There has been for some time a considerable revival in Mr. Spring's church, New York; and I am happy to be able to add that a similar state of things has also commenced in Philadelphia. It began six weeks since, in Mr. Patterson's congregation, Northern Liberties. When I heard from there last week, it was supposed that the number of the awakened and inquiring in that congregation was a hundred and fifty. About three weeks since, the revival made its appearance also in Arch Street Church, and they are now enjoying a very solemn and interesting season. Mr. Skinner is much engaged, and is evidently growing in public favour. We have nothing special in our region, except at Morristown and Springfield. Mr. Henry Mills has accepted a call from Woodbridge.

Miss Gorham has rented the house in which Mr. Witherspoon lives, and intends taking a number of young ladies to board with her. Her two sisters will be associated with her,—one of them to assist her in the school, the other to take charge of the family. I would take it as a favour if you would interest yourself among your acquaintances to procure boarders for her. You know her great worth and excellence as a teacher, and will doubtless agree with me in the opinion that her school is not inferior to any other in the State. She is an admirable disciplinarian as well as a most competent teacher.

Believe me your affectionate brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

Towards the close of the year 1816, a steamboat company determined to run their boat from Elizabethtown to New York on the Sabbath. At this Mr. McDowell was sorely grieved, and the rather as he found that the enterprise was encouraged and sustained by a leading member of his congregation, who had always been considered decidedly friendly to morality and religion, who occupied a high place in civil society, and who withal was one of his most generous and devoted friends. As soon as the youthful Pastor became apprized of what was doing, he addressed a letter (a copy of which is still in existance) to the gentleman referred to, which, for judiciousness, earnestness, tenderness, and unshrinking fidelity, I have rarely seen equalled. The effort was not unavailing; and the evil complained of was arrested.

The year 1817 was another year signalized, in Mr. McDowell's ministry, as a year of the right hand of the Most High. It was my privilege, being then a student in the Princeton Seminary, to pass a few days with him during this period, including a Communion Sabbath, when, if my memory serves me, about eighty were admitted to the Church. The sermon which he preached on the occasion was from the text, " Who are these that fly as a cloud and as doves to their win-

dows?" It was at once highly appropriate and impressive; but it seemed as if we had not more than half comprehended the meaning of the text until we saw the throng of candidates for admission coming forth to fill up the aisles of the venerable old church. Dr. Romeyn and Dr. McLelland, then of New York, participated in the service; and, as the whole scene comes up to my memory now, it seems to me to have diminished the distance between earth and Heaven quite as much as any thing I ever witnessed. This revival continued about a year, and, as the fruit of it, one hundred and eighty were admitted to the church.

The following letter, addressed to the Rev. Jonathan Freeman, of Bridgeton, N. J., while the revival was yet in progress, presents a very satisfactory view of its origin and general character.

ELIZABETHTOWN, *July* 8, 1817.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

I promised you an account of the glorious work of God in this place, and, but for my manifold engagements in connection with it, my promise would have been fulfilled at an earlier date. Several times during the fall, there appeared to be an increased attention to religion amongst us, and our hopes were proportionally raised, only, however, to be blasted. About the middle of December, a revival commenced in Dr. Richards' church at Newark, but, for several weeks after this, my people continued in a state of apparent indifference. In the latter part of January, some few Christians appeared

to be quickened to an earnest desire that God's work might be revived. On the last Friday evening in January, I lectured, as usual, in our session house; but, though the evening was pleasant, my audience was very small. At the close of the lecture, I made a few remarks on the state of things amongst us as compared with that in Newark, and appointed a meeting for professors the next evening, with a view to united and fervent prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit in the midst of us. At that meeting there were present about one hundred professors of religion. It was an evening of solemn self-searching, of confession, humiliation, and earnest supplication. The next day, which was the Sabbath, it was evident that an unusual solemnity rested upon the congregation. I announced, at the close of the second service, that the Session would spend the next afternoon together in prayer for a revival of religion, which, indeed, was only the repetition of an appointment made about a week before. At the same time, I requested all who desired to see God's work revived to retire at four o'clock into their closets, and unite with the Session for half an hour in prayer. The Session met — and a very solemn meeting it was — and I believe there were many, at the same time, in their closets. That evening was the Monthly Concert of Prayer; but, though it was uncommonly full and solemn, I did not know that there was a single person specially impressed. The next evening I attended a meeting in a private house. Here the power of the Lord was visibly manifested, and many were in tears; and these, when I dismissed the people, continued standing and weeping. After conversing with a few of them, I left the place, and had scarcely reached my house, when I was sent for to go to the house of a lady who keeps a Female Boarding School. I found her whole family, about twenty in number, so deeply wrought upon that they were sobbing aloud. I said a few words to them, offered a prayer, and came away.

This burst of feeling, which continued during the next day, commenced while a chapter was being read, preparatory to family prayers; none of the family had been at meeting that evening, except two sisters of the Principal of the school, and they had not yet gone into the room. The next evening was the meeting of my Bible Class. A large number of young people were present, and before the exercises closed, they were almost all weeping aloud. From this time the work spread rapidly, until it had reached every neighbourhood in the congregation. At every meeting, (and there was one every night,) the arrows of conviction flew thick, and new cases of awakening daily occurred. The next week after it began, I appointed a meeting solely for the awakened, to converse and pray with, and exhort them. The first week fifty attended; the second, a hundred; the third, two hundred; and the fourth, four hundred. This was about the highest number that attended this meeting at any one time. As the bounds of my congregation are very extensive, few of the subjects from the country could attend this meeting; so that I have supposed that if all equally impressed with those who attended had been there, the number would not have fallen short of six hundred. Many of these, however, were very young, say from ten to fourteen; and many of them, I have no doubt, were affected merely from sympathy. The work has proceeded with great silence. Except in one or two evenings at the commencement, scarcely an instance of audible weeping has occurred. The coloured people have largely shared in the blessing; and they have evidently been prepared for it, chiefly through the influence of the Sunday School.

The season of distress has, in many instances, been unusally short, and the terrors of remorse have yielded almost immediately to the peace that passeth understanding. The greater number of subjects have been persons in the

morning of life, though there have been some of all ages. Almost all the youth who have attended my catechetical and biblical instructions give evidence of having experienced the saving change. Not a small number of children also, are, we trust, the subjects of a genuine conversion. And, I must add, the riches of Divine grace have been signally manifested in bringing into the dust some persons of the most profligate and abandoned character. The work still continues, and since my return from Philadelphia, a number of new instances of awakening have occurred. On the fourth Sabbath in June, we had our communion — seventy-seven were received as the first fruits — we still expect a glorious harvest.

I hope the good work prospers among your own people.

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

The next important incident, in connection with Mr. McDowell's ministry, is indicated by the following certificate from the Rev. Dr. Green.

This is to certify to all whom it may concern, that the bearer, the Rev. John McDowell, Pastor of the Presbyterian church in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, has been appointed by the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary established by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to solicit donations and subscriptions to said Seminary, in the Southern States of the American Union ; and that he is duly and fully authorized to receive any benefactions intended for said Seminary, in whatever form they may be made.

Given under my hand at Princeton, this 2d day of January, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and eighteen.

ASHBEL GREEN, *President of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary.*

In pursuance of this commission, Mr. McDowell sailed from New York on the 11th of January, 1818, for Savannah, where he arrived after a stormy and disagreeable passage of ten days. Here he met a cordial welcome from his brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Kollock, whose guest he was so long as he remained in the city. As Presbyterianism was then somewhat at a discount in Savannah, Dr. Kollock gave him no encouragement of success in his application; while yet he allowed him to present the object in his pulpit, and afterwards to make private solicitations among his people. The result of the effort, however, disappointed both the Doctor and himself, the sum which he collected being not less than eighteen hundred dollars. After remaining at Savannah and in the neighbourhood about a fortnight, he proceeded to Augusta, where also he prosecuted his mission very successfully, being seconded in his applications by some of the most prominent individuals of the place. During his stay here, occurred the Funeral of the Hon. John Milledge, who had been Governor of Georgia, and whose residence was about three miles from Augusta. Mr. McDowell attended the Funeral as a clergyman, and took part in the services; and he seems to have been deeply impressed by the splendid pageantry he witnessed. From Augusta he went

to Waynesboro', where he was most hospitably received, but, by the advice of his friend, Mr. Whitehead, at whose house he staid, did not attempt—owing to some peculiar circumstances—to bring his object before the people, though Mr. W. himself made to it a liberal contribution. After a short visit at Waynesboro', he returned to Savannah, and thence travelled by water to Charleston, where he arrived on the 5th of March, having had a most tempestuous and perilous passage. Here, in acceptance of an invitation which had been sent to him while he was in Georgia, he made his home at the house of the Rev. Dr. Palmer, where every thing was done that could be for his accommodation and comfort. The object of his mission met with a hearty approval from the several Presbyterian ministers, and one of them (Dr. Flinn) testified practically his sense of its importance by the generous contribution of five hundred dollars. Here he spent some three weeks, preaching to different congregations on the Sabbath, and making personal applications to the more wealthy and benevolent during the week; and his success fully equalled his highest expectations. The sum of the contributions was not far from five thousand dollars, twenty-five hundred of which was given by the ladies to establish a scholarship. He was greatly impressed by

the urbane and kindly bearing of the people of Charleston, by their intellectual and social culture, and by the high tone of religious feeling evinced by many of them; while yet he seems to have thought that a spirit of refined gaiety was quite in the ascendant. Having done his work at Charleston, he passed on to Raleigh, N. C., whence, after staying only long enough to fulfil an appointment in preaching, which the Rev. Dr. McPheeters, in anticipation of his visit, had made for him, he proceeded to Hillsboro', the residence of his two brothers-in-law, the Rev. John Witherspoon and Judge Nash. Here and hereabouts he passed a very pleasant week, chiefly in visiting his friends, and then set his face in good earnest in a Northerly direction. On the 21st of April, he was restored to his family and his flock, in better health than when he left them, and was permitted to unite with them in devout thanksgiving to God that both he and they had been so mercifully preserved and cared for during the period of their separation. For several days after his return, his house was literally thronged by his grateful and rejoicing parishioners. During his absence, his pulpit had been very acceptably supplied by the Rev. Backus Wilbur, who was shortly after settled as Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Dayton, Ohio.

In 1818, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Mr. McDowell, by both the University of North Carolina and Union College.

The following congratulatory letter from his brother-in-law, Dr. Henry Kollock, was written shortly after the honour was conferred.

SAVANNAH, *July* 18, 1818.

MY DEAR BROTHER :

Though I wrote to Elizabethtown a few days since, I cannot let Mr. Camp return without telling you that I am well ; that the town was never more healthy ; and that we have all the prospect of a pleasant summer. Yet this prospect may soon be changed. May we then be always prepared for the dispensations of Providence, ready to live or die at the call of God.

I congratulate you on the degree conferred upon you by the University of North Carolina. It indeed has ceased to become very honourable ; but you have deserved it ; and though others, with no pretensions to it, wear it, yet still "qui palmam meruit ferat." I hope you are not as angry as was my predecessor, Dr. Zubly, because they have not given you an opportunity of writing your Latin dissertation. While speaking on this subject, I may as well remind you that my degree was first conferred on me by Harvard University. In the Catalogue you have mentioned only the conferment of it from Union College. If there is any honour in it, I more regard the former, as it proceeds from an institution that has been less profuse in its degrees than the younger colleges ; which, like some young Presbyteries have been anxious to seize every opportunity of displaying and exercising their power. You may therefore make an alteration in the College Catalogue.

Our city is now very much deserted. You have doubtless met many of our people at the North, who have informed you of every thing connected with Savannah. Be assured I shall ever remain your friend and brother,

HENRY KOLLOCK.

The following letter from the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) John Witherspoon, who was married to a sister of Mrs. McDowell, written a few months after Dr. M.'s return from the South, is not without historical interest.

HILLSBORO', N. C., *December* 23, 1818.

MY DEAR BROTHER :

Since you left the rank of plain *Mr.*, I have received from you but one letter—before that, you were a very good, punctual correspondent. This is a great falling off ; and we all feel it here, as we depend on you alone for the news from Jersey. I beg you will, without any delay, return to your good old habits, and let your friends again have the benefit of your correspondence. Our Brother William and myself commenced begging last week in Raleigh ; and, though our success was not very great, we received something to encourage us. No doubt he has informed you of the shameful interruption he experienced in his begging sermon on Sabbath morning, by the drum and fife of a number of Freemasons, passing by the church. Nearly one half of the congregation rose and went out. Not only the pious, but all lovers of order present, were deeply grieved, considering it as an expression of hostility against Presbyterianism in that place. But we live in a land of liberty—here follows a specimen of it. A bill was lately introduced into the Legislature of North Carolina, *forbidding any person to teach a slave to read or write, under the penalty of a heavy fine and imprisonment.* It was rejected in the Commons by two votes

—fifty-eight against fifty-six. Seldom, if ever, my brother, have my feelings been so much harrowed as they were on that occasion. I was in the gallery of the house with William and Brother McPheeters, when this shameful bill was read, discussed and disposed of. I blushed and was ashamed for the miserable, degraded country where I dwell. Poor, unhappy Africans! They would not only shut the door of the Kingdom of God against themselves, but would even throw away the key, lest it might be opened for you! Shall I remain in a land where such monstrous abuse of liberty of conscience *can* be permitted? Had such a measure passed, I would not have remained a month within the reach of such an abominable statute. The curse of God would have followed it; and even now we have reason to fear his awful judgments. I pity, from my soul, the young man who introduced it, and tremble for his situation. You see, my brother, the materials among which your brethren in this country have to labour. Will not our Northern brethren pray for us? My heart revolts at these things, and I would gladly remove from them, if I could only see it to be the course of duty. As yet I cannot; and whatever be the trial, I must labour on, and do what little I can. Another bill was introduced to prevent drawing the seine to catch fish on the Lord's day;—a common practice in the lower part of this State. The bill was lost; and thus the Legislature of North Carolina tacitly encourages Sabbath-breaking. My brother has been elected a Judge, but I doubt whether he will accept of it. A strong influence was brought to bear against him, because he is a religious man, and therefore unfit to be a Judge among wicked people! Oh, Sir, my very soul sickens at the state of things I behold around me. A man debased in principle, and steeped in sensuality, is chosen to fill offices for which the man of integrity and piety as well as talents, is deemed unfit. Pray write to me very soon, and believe me affectionately yours, J. WITHERSPOON.

## To His Brother, Benjamin McDowell, of Bedminster, N. J.

Elizabethtown, *June* 1, 1819.

My Dear Brother:

I received your letter yesterday. I truly sympathize with my dear sister in the afflictive dispensation of Providence with which she has lately been visited. I hope and pray that it may be sanctified to her spiritual benefit, and that of her husband. These painful events which wring our hearts in agony, are often made blessings in the end. That the Lord afflicts is no evidence that he does not love—on the contrary we are told,—"Whom he loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Present my affectionate remembrance to her and her husband. There is no permanent happiness here. I hope I increasingly feel more of this. Blessed be God that, amid the trials of life, we have the assurance that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. Oh that we may think more of that rest; long more for it; and give more diligence to secure an interest in it. This is a world not only of sorrow but of sin; and it is sin that makes it sorrowful. If sin is embittered to us by the trials of life, they will be profitable trials. Let this, my brother, be our aim and most earnest desire, under the afflictions we are called to experience, that they may be sanctified to us, in causing us to hate sin more, and long more intensely after the Heavenly rest; where the wicked shall no more stand in the congregation of the righteous, and where all tears shall be wiped away.

I am surprised to hear the sad intelligence respecting your congregation. These distractions, to one who loves the cause of God, are exceedingly painful. But, my brother, "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." This is a text, which has often comforted me in seasons of darkness; and I pray God that you may feel the power and comfort of it in your

own soul, in this day of darkness and rebuke. God is in the midst of Zion, and He will help her; and no weapon formed against her shall prosper. God will take care of his own cause—we need not fear for the ark, though it shake. It is true that we have no promise that an individual congregation shall be preserved, but we have that the Church at large shall stand—and this is our comfort. I think you have done your duty in standing by the congregation of your fathers so long, in the midst of all the trials you have had to endure, and I hope you will still maintain your ground—the worse the state of things becomes, the more need there is that the friends of Zion should stand in the breach. I think the state of things will soon be better; but I feel assured that you will maintain a right spirit while the conflict lasts. The best advice I can give you is to seek counsel at a throne of grace, pray for the sanctification of your trials and commit your case unto the Lord. Your affectionate brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

About the close of 1819, Dr. McDowell was privileged to witness the commencement of another revival of religion in his congregation. This did not pervade the congregation so entirely as the revival immediately preceding had done, but was confined to particular neighbourhoods. Nor was the church so earnestly engaged in the work as the devoted Pastor could have desired. The subjects were generally from irreligious, and, in some cases, from notoriously profligate, families; while the more decent and moral and promising were passed by. This season of special attention con-

tinued about a year; and there were added to the communion of the church, as its fruits, about sixty.

In 1820, Dr. McDowell served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church; and his great familiarity with Presbyterial rules, his aptitude for public business, his untiring industry, and exact punctuality, and singular devotion to the best interests of the Church, qualified him pre-eminently for the duties of that difficult place.

During this year, (1820,) the church of which Dr. McDowell was Pastor, numbered no less than six hundred and sixty members; and it was thought best that a colony from it should be organized into a Second church. This was accordingly done; and the act of organization was performed by Dr. McDowell. Of the new church the Rev. (now Dr.) David Magie, a native of Elizabethtown, who had been brought into the church under Dr. McDowell's ministry, became the Pastor. He has had a long, honoured and highly successful ministry, and still survives to pay a grateful tribute to his early spiritual guide.

In the spring of 1821, Dr. McDowell became deeply interested in a missionary enterprise, which awakened a very general sympathy throughout the Church. It forms the subject of the following letter addressed to his brother Benjamin.

ELIZABETHTOWN, *March* 11, 1821.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I passed through a very interesting scene last week. A mission family collected from nine different States, consisting of twenty-five grown persons, male and female, and sixteen children, were set apart in New York by the United Foreign Mission Society, to spend their days among the Great Osage Indians, about five hundred miles beyond the Mississippi. The setting apart of this family took place in Dr. Mason's Church on Monday evening, and the farewell meeting was in the Middle Dutch Church on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday afternoon, they set out from New York on board our steamboat. The houses were excessively crowded each evening, and several thousand people were on the wharf to witness their departure. Quite a number accompanied them to Elizabethtown. We held a meeting in my church on Wednesday evening, and the house was crowded. On Thursday morning they all assembled at my house, and a great crowd of other people with them. We had singing and prayer; after which they set out in carriages, provided by our people, for New Brunswick. We formed a procession of thirteen carriages, our excellent Governor and myself being placed at the head of it. The people of my congregation made up two hundred and thirty garments, forty articles of bedding, and other articles, amounting in all to five hundred. We collected about one hundred and seventy dollars in money, and conveyed the family, with their travelling baggage, free of expense, to New Brunswick.

Dear brother, it is a day of wonders. It becomes us to be up and doing. The Saviour is on his way to take possession of his kingdom, and to fill the earth with his glory.

Your brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

Early in the year 1822, Dr. McDowell received a call from the Rutgers Street Presbyterian Congregation in New York to become their Pastor; but he had no doubt that it was his duty to decline it, and he did so promptly.

During the sessions of the General Assembly of 1822, Dr. McDowell was deeply interested in laying the corner-stone of a new church, to be occupied by his friend, the Rev. Thomas H. Skinner,—Dr. Romeyn and one or two other prominent clergymen taking part in the service. At the same meeting of the Assembly he was appointed, with Dr. John H. Rice, of Virginia, a delegate to the General Associations of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Having joined Dr. and Mrs. Rice in New York, on the 12th of June, he proceeded towards New England, and, on the first day, reached Stratford, Conn., where he had much pleasure in meeting the Rev. Mr. Dutton, the Congregational minister of the place, and some other friends. The next day (Friday) he, with his fellow travellers, went to New Haven, and remained there till Monday. Dr. McDowell was the guest of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Taylor, and preached for him Sabbath morning, and in the afternoon in the College Chapel. He spent Saturday in visiting the College

Library, the Cabinet of Minerals and other curiosities, in calling upon Dr. Morse and other friends, and in the evening he met and addressed the College students. From New Haven he went on his way to Hartford, and thence to Tolland, where the General Association of Connecticut met, and where I had myself the pleasure of meeting both Dr. McDowell and Dr. Rice, and hearing both of them preach. Here Dr. McDowell, not only by his preaching, which was very direct and earnest, but by his dignified bearing and evident familiarity with ecclesiastical rule, attracted no small degree of attention. After the Association had adjourned, he took a seat in my chaise to Hartford, and thence to West Springfield, which was at that time my home, and remained with me for several days,—most of the time until the General Association of Massachusetts, which assembled a day or two afterwards in Springfield, had closed its session. He had engaged to divide the labours of the Sabbath between me and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Osgood ; but a sudden attack of illness prevented his preaching at all on the Sabbath, though I heard him preach the Sermon preparatory to the Communion at Springfield, from the text, "Awake, O North wind," &c. It was an excellent discourse, delivered with his characteristic unction, and produced a stro[illegible]

impression upon the audience. He was received and treated by the New England ministers, both here and at Tolland, with great consideration and deference, and was regarded by them as a most favourable specimen of an earnest and faithful preacher.

The following letter was addressed to his brother William, in reply to one in which he had asked his advice in respect to the propriety of his accepting a call from Charleston, S. C.

ELIZABETHTOWN, *August* 1, 1823.

MY DEAR BROTHER :

I have just received your letter, and hasten to give you my views of the important subject to which it relates,—a subject which has been in my mind a considerable time, as I have anticipated the event which your letter informs me has taken place. My opinion has uniformly been that, in case you received a unanimous call from that church, with the promise of an adequate support, you ought to accept it. I shall certainly very much regret your removal from this part of the Church, and I know it must be exceedingly trying to you to leave your present charge among whom you are so respectably, comfortably and usefully settled—trying also to leave your native State, the country of your own and your wife's kindred, and also to have your present ecclesiastical and literary connections dissolved. But it appears to me that if health and life be worth preserving, you are called to make this sacrifice. It is this consideration that operates upon my mind with irresistible force. Your life is too valuable to your family and to the Church to be unnecessarily sacrificed; and it appears to me to be reduced almost to a certainty that you cannot live long at Morristown, or in a Northern climate.

Besides, I cannot resist the impression that God, in his providence, is directing you to the place where He designs to make you eminently useful. He owned your labors in that city the last winter; and He has, after his guidance had been sought by a few eminently pious people, desirous of creating a standard of primitive piety and discipline in that populous city, directed their minds unanimously to you. I view this, under the circumstances of the case as a marked indication of Providence. I believe the enterprise of those men is incalculably important to the interests of religion in that city; and not in that city only, but in all that region of the Church. And I do believe that, if health was not concerned in this movement, your prospects of ministerial usefulness are far greater in Charleston than in your present charge; notwithstanding the latter at present greatly exceeds the former in point of numbers. Besides, it appears to me that if you had wished to remove to a milder climate, and could have chosen a place for yourself in the whole wide range of the Southern country, you could not have found a situation in all respects more desirable. In respect to both comfort and usefulness, I cannot but think that it is greatly to be preferred before any of the old established churches of the South. Besides, Charleston is one of the healthiest places in all the Southern country. I shall hope to see you at Princeton, and to have an opportunity of conversing with you at length on this subject. Meanwhile, commending you to God's gracious direction, I am your affectionate brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

In the early part of January, 1824, another revival of religion commenced, which continued with a moderate degree of power, till the close of the next year, bringing into the communion of the church during

that period, about sixty persons. But, at that time, (December, 1825,) it received a fresh impulse, in connection with the observance of a Day of Fasting and Prayer, appointed by the Synod of New Jersey on account of the general absence of Divine influence from their churches. It continued till the close of the year 1826, and during this year about one hundred and thirty were added to the church. It was remarkable for the very short time that intervened between the first awakening and the hopeful conversion of most of its subjects.

In the autumn of 1824, Dr. McDowell received a unanimous call to become the Pastor of the Wall Street Congregation in the city of New York. The result of the negotiation on this subject appears from the following document from Dr. McDowell, bearing date December 11, 1824.

*To the Session and Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church, Elizabethtown:*

Dear Brethren:

I beg leave to communicate to you, and through you to the congregation, the result of my deliberations in regard to the call from the First Presbyterian Church in the city of New York. The following is a copy of a letter which I have just put into the Post-office, directed to the Commissioners appointed by that congregation to prosecute the call. This letter contains my answer to them.

Elizabethtown, *November*, 11, 1824.

Gentlemen:

The call from your congregation has received my most serious and deliberate consideration. I have endeavoured to collect every argument bearing on the subject, and have carefully and anxiously weighed the reasons for and against my removal. I have diligently sought the advice of others. I have spread the whole matter before the Lord, and have again and again asked for light, and begged of Him to direct my judgment aright, and incline my heart to the path of duty. Ever since I received notice that the call was made out, I have experienced a painful conflict in respect to it. This day I have secluded myself from my family and from the world, and have spent its hours alone in my study, in fasting and prayer, and meditation upon this important subject. At length I have come to a definite decision, and it is that I cannot sunder the ties that bind me to this people. I cannot feel satisfied that it is the will of Providence that I should remove from this place, where God has so signally owned and blessed my labours. My feelings revolt at the prospect of inflicting so deep a wound as I clearly see would be caused in the hearts of those I love, and who have uniformly manifested a warm attachment to me, and many of whom are God's dear people, and my children in the Gospel. And I dare not hazard the division, and perhaps prostration, of one of the most important congregations in the Presbyterian connection, and one whose interests I have, for twenty years, been endeavouring to advance. I must, therefore, Gentlemen, most respectfully request that the call may not be farther prosecuted. If I could have come to this decision before, I would gladly have saved you the trouble to which you have been subjected. I feel most deeply for your congregation in their present bereaved state; and I do most earnestly pray that the Great Head of the Church may keep you of one mind, and may speedily direct

you to a Pastor after his own heart, who shall be a rich blessing to you and your children.

I am, Gentlemen, with sincere and high respect for you individually, and with earnest desires for the welfare of the congregation you represent,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN McDOWELL.

ROBERT LENOX, ESQ., AND DR. JOHN R. B. ROGERS.

In the above letter, Dear Brethren, you have my decision in regard to the call. I have desired to do right, and I hope I have not erred. The subject has caused me much anxiety and distress, but my mind is now at ease. For all the pain which any of my people have suffered on this account, I am deeply grieved. If I could, consistently with a sense of duty, have relieved their minds sooner, it should certainly have been done. I have only to add a prayer that this decision may redound to the glory of God, and the best interests of that dear flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made me overseer; and to subscribe myself

Your and the congregation's devoted servant,

JOHN McDOWELL.

The following Resolution, which was adopted unanimously by the congregation, on the Sabbath morning after his decision was made known to them, was alike creditable to Pastor and people.

*Resolved*, That this new proof of affection shown to us by the Rev. Dr. John McDowell, in rejecting the call lately presented to him by the First Presbyterian Church in the city of New York, demands an expression of our profound gratitude—that we view it as an assurance that he is the chosen shepherd of this flock, and are encouraged to regard it as a pledge that the ties which, on this occasion, he has held indissoluble, will

not be sundered till he shall be called to the rich reward that awaits him in his Master's Kingdom.

CALEB HALSTED.

But, notwithstanding Dr. McDowell thus signified his determination to remain with his people, and the anxiety and agitation which had been felt on the subject were now succeeded by a calm feeling of security, this state of things was not destined to continue long without interruption. In September of the next year, (1825), the Wall Street Congregation were moved to another effort in the same direction with the preceding —they presented Dr. McDowell another unanimous and very urgent call. Though his attachment to his congregation and his interest in their welfare had undergone no abatement, he seems now to have been brought to the conviction that it was his duty to accept the call; and this he very plainly intimated to his congregation, as well as to the Commissioners from the Wall Street Church, appointed to prosecute the call before the Presbytery. His congregation determined to place every obstacle they could in the way of his removal, appointed Commissioners to represent their convictions and wishes to the Presbytery, Dr. McDowell meanwhile expressing his entire willingness to submit to the Presbyterial decision, whatever it

might be, as indicating the will of Providence. When the Presbytery met, about the beginning of November, the question of his removal was argued, on both sides, with great earnestness and ability, and the result was a unanimous decision that it was his duty to remain at Elizabethtown. This result was most thankfully acknowledged by another formal Resolution on the part of his congregation, while some at least of the good people of Wall Street were disposed to write bitter things against the Presbytery, for having thwarted not only their earnest wishes but confident expectations.

The General Assembly, in 1825, chose Dr. McDowell its Permanent Clerk; which office he held, discharging its duties with great ability and fidelity, for eleven years.

In June, 1826, the attempt which had been made just twenty years before to run a steamboat between New York and Elizabethtown Point on the Sabbath, was renewed, but happily without success. The following letter, addressed by Dr. McDowell to the Captain of the boat, shows that his sense of the impropriety and immorality of the act was as deep as ever.

Dear Sir:

I have uniformly felt a deep interest in the Point establishment, and have endeavoured to promote it — what I am about to say, therefore, must not be set down to the account of

prejudice. Yesterday I took up an Elizabethtown paper, and was greatly pained to find in it an advertisement that your steamboat runs to the Point on the Sabbath day. I have been absent from home, or I suppose I should have known it before. I view this as fitted to have such a demoralizing effect upon the town, that, let me suffer what I may, I cannot, in conscience, keep silence. My situation, not only as a citizen, and a respecter of the law of God in regard to the Sabbath, but especially as a minister of Christ, bound, under pain of the heavy displeasure of the Great God, to give the people warning, will not suffer me to be silent. I might urge a great many reasons against the running of your boat on the Sabbath; but I will not undertake this now.

My object, in addressing you this note, is most respectfully and affectionately to request of you and your associates to take this matter into most serious consideration, and speedily put an end to the evil complained of. In this request I have no doubt that I speak the language of a majority of the inhabitants of this town. I have conversed with a number of our most influential people, and they all unite in a common expression of disapproval. It is not only the religious part of the community who deeply regret the step you have taken, but many other of our most respectable citizens. Will you, my dear Sir, continue to contravene the wishes, and disregard the feelings, of a multitude who have been, and still wish to be, your patrons? If you will persevere in this, I can only say that I have altogether mistaken your character. If you think it best to stop at once, many others beside myself will rejoice in it. But if not, then I have another request to make — it is that you would allow me and several other persons an interview with you, that we may talk the matter over in a friendly manner; and we wish to have this interview as soon as possible. If you agree to this suggestion, please to let me know when and where we may meet you.

I am, Dear Sir, respectfully yours,

JOHN McDOWELL.

In 1826, Dr. McDowell published a System of Theology, consisting of one hundred and seven Discourses, arranged in the order of the Shorter Catechism, in two octavo volumes. These Discourses, which are characterized by great perspicuity and unction, and are of a highly evangelical type, had been previously addressed to his people from the pulpit, and were now dedicated to them, as a token of his affectionate regard.

At the meeting of the General Assembly in 1828, Dr. McDowell was appointed Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Western (Allegheny) Theological Seminary. In writing to his brother-in-law, the Rev. Shepard Kollock, shortly after, he says,— referring to this appointment,— "The subject is seriously before my mind, and I am endeavouring to obtain the light necessary to enable me to come to the right decision. I should be glad to have your views in relation to it." The result was that, after due consideration, he became satisfied that it was his duty to decline the appointment.

In the winter and spring of 1829, an unusual attention to religion prevailed in his congregation, which resulted in the addition of about twenty-five to the communion of the Church. During about the first half of this year, his preaching averaged one sermon

a day. Another revival occurred in the winter and spring of 1831, though it was confined to certain neighbourhoods, and never became general. It numbered about forty subjects.

Early in the summer of 1831, Dr. McDowell was apprized of the probability of his being chosen to the Professorship of Church History and Polity in the Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, and was confidentially inquired of as to the prospect of his acceptance. As the Seminary was under the care of the Synods of Virginia and North Carolina, the mode of election was for each Synod to cast its votes, and if both agreed to nominate the same person, nothing remained for the Board of Directors but to sanction the united choice; but, in case of a disagreement, it devolved upon the Directors to settle the question of the election. The Synod of North Carolina met towards the close of August, and all the members but five voted for Dr. McDowell; and *they* acquiesced cheerfully in his appointment. The meeting of the Synod of Virginia took place early in September, when he was nominated to the Professorship with entire unanimity. In the prospect of this election, Dr. Archibald Alexander wrote to Dr. Plumer, then a prominent member of the Virginia Synod, as follows:

"Dr. Rice's decease has left a chasm in Virginia which none but God can fill. His influence was extensive and rested on a solid basis. He understood the Virginian character, and, in selecting a successor, you will run a mighty risk in this respect, if the man should possess all other qualifications. I do not perceive how you could obtain a better man than Dr. McDowell. He has fervent piety, decision of character, energy of action, and excellent habits of business. If he were younger, his literary career might be brighter; but he is sound in the Faith; a Confession of Faith man, through and through; and a pungent, powerful, practical preacher, who will soon make the people forget his notes. You must have a man of energy, who fears no labours, and who can win the affections of the pious people. Dr. McDowell is the man. But ought you not to make him your Professor of Theology? If you get him, however, you can easily manage this matter, when you fix on your third Professor. On this subject I have no suggestions to make. May God direct in all that concerns his Church!"

Dr. McDowell, after looking at the subject in all its bearings, arrived at the conclusion that it was his duty to accept the appointment, notwithstanding the great personal sacrifices which he knew it must involve. The grounds upon which he reached this conclusion were chiefly these—that he had nearly reached the period of life at which his ability for the ordinary labours of the ministry must begin to wane, while he might become increasingly competent to discharge the duties of the Professorship, if his life should be spared, for many years; that Theological Seminaries are emphat-

ically the nurseries of the Church, and that they have a right to put the Church in requisition for her more experienced ministers; and that the Seminary to which he was called was so peculiarly situated that he could not decline the appointment without placing its interests in the most serious jeopardy. The Presbytery, at its meeting in Elizabethtown, on the 1st of November, after hearing Dr. McDowell and the Commissioners of the congregation present their reasons respectively for and against his being permitted to resign his charge, decided in favour of the dissolution of his pastoral relation, and dismissed him to join the Presbytery of West Hanover in Virginia. The Doctor then immediately wrote to Virginia, formally signifying his acceptance of the appointment, and commenced his preparations for the removal of his family. He, however, very soon found that he had to encounter obstacles which he had not anticipated. Mrs. McDowell, when the matter of leaving her native place for a residence in a remote part of the country, where she would be an entire stranger, came to be looked at as a stern reality, found that her resolution began to falter; and so powerful was the effect that was produced upon her that her husband became exceedingly embarrassed in respect to his own duty. The congregation, meanwhile, were

weeping bitter tears at the prospect of his departure; and, as soon as the state of Mrs. McDowell's mind became known to them, it suggested to them the idea of carrying the case up to the Synod; and, as the ten days, in which they had a right to appeal, were not yet past, they lost no time in taking that important step.

The Doctor was now placed in an exceedingly embarrassing position; and, for aught that appeared, he must remain where he was until the appeal was either issued or withdrawn. He laboured earnestly with the Commissioners to induce them to withdraw it, and with some prospect of success; but when the matter came to be referred to the congregation on the next Sabbath, they decided unanimously that the appeal should be continued. As the stated meeting of Synod was almost a year distant, and a special meeting could not be called without subjecting the members to great inconvenience, and as it was of great importance to all the parties concerned to have the matter settled as soon as possible, it was finally agreed between Dr. McDowell and the Commissioners acting for the congregation, that the case should be submitted to the judgment of ten men, — five ministers and five elders, mutually chosen, and that both parties would abide by their decision. This council accordingly met on the 22d of

November, and, after a patient hearing of the case, decided that the indications of Providence were clearly in favour of his remaining with his congregation. The Presbytery met shortly after, and, without any installation, continued him as Pastor. The following letter from the Rev. Dr. Goodrich, one of the Professors of the Seminary, written in reply to one from Dr. McDowell, before the matter was consummated, but announcing its probable issue, will give some idea of the disappointment which the result occasioned in Virginia.

UNION SEMINARY, *November* 16, 1831.

REV. AND DEAR SIR :

Your letter from Princeton has so much astounded me that I shall scarcely be able to write an intelligible answer. In the phrase of our Randolph, we are blown "sky-high." After the delays we have sustained from our complicated machinery of government; after the disappointment in the case of Dr. McAuley, and after the lamented death of Dr. Rice, we could not have received a severer blow than this event. I expect that it will well-nigh annihilate our Senior class; that it will so reduce the Middle class that it will be scarcely worth attention; and that it will so discourage the Junior as to render them discontented and greatly hinder their improvement. Then the whole affair must be raised again from the roots; and this event again will so discourage the planting and nursing of churches in this region that I should not be surprised if many of our ministers, from this fact alone, should abandon their ground and go West. I feel utterly heart broken about it. I wrote last night to most of the members of the Board and others; but the Board cannot

meet again this fall, and they could do nothing if they did. I need not stop to say *how*, but we are so fixed that another motion could not possibly be made till December, 1832.

I do not think that any will doubt that you have acted in all this matter in entire good faith, nor do I think they will try to compel you to fulfil the engagement at the expense of the comfort of your family. But may not Mrs. McDowell's objections be removed? Is it to come among a strange people that she objects? They are a delightful people. I never knew a stranger who was not charmed with them. Is it fear of insurrection? This upper country is just as safe as Jersey. Is it any thing that can be named, or is it merely that natural misgiving which we all feel on undertaking an unusual enterprise, and passing into another sphere? This often depends merely on our health at the moment, or on the agitation of parting, and will all pass away. I know not what the Great God has designed by this event — perhaps it is to rebuke *our* trust in man — perhaps to try the strength of *your* devotion to his cause, or to test the generosity and self-denial of your people. We must wait for the providence of God to explain itself.

Yours in the Gospel bond,

HIRAM P. GOODRICH.

That the delicate and difficult subject of Slavery was not overlooked by Dr. McDowell or his friends in view of the prospect of his becoming an inhabitant of the South, is clearly shown by the statement he made on occasion of the reference, which still remains in manuscript, as well as by various letters addressed to him from the South about that time. To the referees, to whom he stated candidly the objections to

his going as well as the considerations that favoured it, he spoke thus.

"Another difficulty which I have been called most seriously to look at,— and I confess it has been and still is an appalling one, is Slavery. I have also long believed it to be a serious evil to bring up a family of children under its influence. I have also supposed the time would come, and probably was not far distant, when the inhabitants of the South would have very serious trouble from that quarter. The difficulty in my mind was greatly increased by the heart-rending intelligence received after my nomination by the Synod of North Carolina, and while I was considering the subject of removal,— I mean the tidings of the dreadful massacre in Southampton, and the almost universal excitement, anxiety and alarm created by this event throughout the Southern States. I have frequently inquired whether it was my duty to take a family of females from the midst of tranquillity, as it regards this subject, into the midst of such a state of things. Besides, I have been aware that, especially in the present state of great excitement on this subject, it will be almost impossible for Northern men to avoid being suspected, and that going there at this time, to have the public confidence, they will need most consummate prudence. But still I made up my mind, in full view of all these difficulties, that it was my duty to go to Virginia. Besides, I supposed that the Union Seminary, if sustained, might be instrumental of increasing the number of well qualified ministers of the Gospel, and thus become an important auxiliary in gradually lessening, and eventually terminating, the evils of Slavery. But still I admit it is a question whether this will not be better done by Southern men against whom the public will not have suspicion on this subject."

The following is an extract from a letter from his brother, Dr. William A. McDowell, at that time Pastor of a church in Charleston, S. C., bearing date October 22d.

I have been anxious to know what your decision would be in regard to the Virginia Professorship, and from what I have heard, as well as from your own letters, I have received the impression that you will most probably accept the appointment. Were I disposed to give an opinion in the case, it would now be too late; as you will probably have decided before this reaches you, and it is perhaps quite as well that I have not had an opportunity to express an opinion. The state of things in this portion of the Southern country has been such for some time past that, were my opinion asked, I could hardly advise any good man from the North to remove into this region. I hope the state of things in Virginia is different from what it is in South Carolina. But really, such is the feeling in this State, such deep rooted hostility against every thing Northern, such a spirit of reckless opposition to the General Government, and such is our domestic state in reference to the slaves, that nothing but a hope that I am doing good here, and that I am needed, would keep me in South Carolina a single week. As to myself, no one could be more desirably situated than I am. With a congregation exactly suited to my mind, and most tenderly attached to me, and to whom I, in turn, am sincerely devoted, and surrounded by a large circle of friends, who do all they can to promote my usefulness and happiness—to leave them would indeed be a severe trial. And yet such is the agitated and uncertain state of things here, that I cannot but consider it doubtful whether I shall remain in the South six months longer. Indeed, how near we are to a revolution here is known only to Him who sees the end from the beginning. But I am touching on a delicate subject, and will say no more."

The following is from a Presbyterian clergyman, at that time Pastor of one of the most important city congregations in Virginia.

"I take it for granted, if you decide to come, you will come prepared to conform, so far as is lawful and expedient, with the peculiarities of the society in which you reside. On the whole subject of Slavery, particularly, a Northern man will find much to call for a prudent forbearance. After residing here seven years, I could say things on that subject, which I believe to be both true and important, that would make it necessary for me to decamp in a week. And in the neighbourhood of the Seminary there is perhaps more jealousy and sensitiveness than here. But I ask myself *cui bono?* And how is the evil ever to be removed, unless they who abhor it, so far keep silent as to permit them to stay in the midst of it, and do what they can? On this subject it is expected that our Legislature will take some decisive step towards its ultimate removal this winter. Let the ball once be set in motion, and there are a thousand forces ready to come in, and push it onward."

In the summer of 1832, the Asiatic cholera first made its appearance in this country, and for several weeks prevailed with desolating power in Elizabethtown. During this period, Dr. McDowell not only remained at his post, but was indefatigable in his attentions to the suffering, mingling with them as a friend and comforter, night and day. His letters to some of his friends, written at this time, show that he was deeply affected by this awful visitation, and that his most earnest desire was that it might be instrumental

of disturbing the spiritual slumbers of the multitude around him.

About the beginning of December, 1832, Dr. McDowell went on a short begging tour to the South, as far as Washington city, in behalf of Princeton College. On the 11th, he wrote the following letter to his daughter Elizabeth, from Baltimore.

My Dear Daughter:

I wrote a letter to your sister on Saturday evening, after my arrival at this place from Washington. I have been much better since my return to this city, and indeed feel almost well. I am staying in a very charming family, — Dr. Baker's, where I have refined, pious society, and every attention I could wish. They are Methodists. I do not expect to be home this week, and probably not until the latter end of next week, if even then. I see from the Observer that Governor Southard has issued his Proclamation for a day of Thanksgiving, on the 20th inst. I wish to be at home by that time, if practicable, and will if I consistently can. Tell the elders to have meeting appointed at the usual time, — one service; and a collection for the poor of the congregation, as usual on such an occasion.

You will, I suppose, like to have an exact history of my movements, since the date of my last letter. I preached for Mr. Nevins, morning and afternoon, and assisted him in the Communion. I also attended with him in the evening in his session-house, and followed him with an exhortation. Yesterday and to-day I have been diligently engaged in the business of the College, and am getting on slowly. I have collected, since I left home, $877, and have got new subscriptions to the amount of $1670. I have endeavoured to-day

to be ready to set my face towards home to-morrow morning; but have finally given up the idea. I do not expect to collect much, if any thing, more here; but I find I can not leave things as I wish to leave them unless I remain over to-morrow. My present plan is to leave here on Thursday morning at half-past six, and stop at Newcastle, Del., which we shall reach by a little after noon, and spend the remainder of the day and the night there; on Friday go to Wilmington, — five miles distant, and there spend the day and night, and if I find it for the interests of the College, spend the Sabbath also; but it is more likely that I shall go up to Philadelphia on Saturday, and spend the Sabbath there, and, after labouring there for a day or two, proceed homewards.

You will, before you receive this, I suppose, have heard of President Jackson's Proclamation in regard to South Carolina. It is a bold and decided document, and pretty much what I think it ought to be. It arrived in this city this morning. I spent half an hour this evening with Mr. Wirt, who is an exceedingly interesting man. But I must close, or I shall lose the mail, and can therefore only add that

I am your affectionate father,
JOHN McDOWELL.

The following extract of a letter which he addressed to his brother-in-law, the Rev. Shepard Kollock, on the 22d of January, 1833, contains a statement of two interesting events in his history, which occurred about this time—namely, his being called to the church in Princeton, and his being appointed General Agent and Secretary of the Board of Missions.

"You inquire about Princeton. The report you mention in your letter, that a call has been made out for me to become

Pastor of that congregation, is, I suppose, true. Little did I think, at the time I wrote to you from Washington, that they had any such thoughts respecting me. Not an individual of that congregation has ever spoken to me on the subject, or sounded me in respect to it, in the most distant or indirect way. I spent a day in Princeton on my way Southward, but no allusion was made to it. I stopped there also on my return, but not a word was said to me looking towards any such measure. I first heard of it in my own house on my return. Professor Dod had preached for me the Sabbath before, and had mentioned to my family that a call would be made out for me the next day. It was, as I understand, informally voted, and has since been formally confirmed; but I have as yet received no official notice of it. I have received one letter from Professor Dod, and another from Dr. Miller, informing me of the fact; but their letters were altogether unofficial, and I have made no reply. The salary voted, I understand, is a thousand dollars and the parsonage. I understand they do not intend to make any official communication to me until their call has been before their Presbytery. I have not yet given the subject a serious thought, and I doubt whether I shall, if the plan is simply that I shall become Pastor of that church. Last night I received a letter from a committee of the Board of Missions, informing me of an appointment to be (as I suppose) General Agent and Secretary of that Board, to be stationed in New York, with a salary of two thousand dollars *per annum*. You know Mr. Russell has resigned his office and gone to Cincinnati, and has become agent for the Valley of the Mississippi. I have been repeatedly applied to in personal conversation, and also by letter from different parts of the Church, earnestly pressing me to consent to suffer my name to be presented; but I have uniformly put a most decided negative on the applications. I know not what the plans are now in proposing to locate me in New York; but I intend to go over to-morrow,

as they have invited me to a personal interview. What Providence intends by these movements at this time, I cannot tell. I sometimes think it is his intention to remove me from this place. I feel as though I needed a location of less labour."

But, notwithstanding Dr. McDowell promptly declined the call both to the Secretaryship of the Board of Missions, and the Pastorship at Princeton, things were now being put in train for his removal from his charge at Elizabethtown. A new church, an offshoot from the church in Arch Street, Philadelphia, was in the process of being formed; and, as early as December, 1832, Dr. McDowell received a letter from Mr. Alexander Henry, who was one of the leaders in the new enterprise, inquiring whether there was any hope that he would listen to an invitation from them to become their Pastor. Notwithstanding the Doctor's attachment to his congregation was undiminished, his health had become so much impaired that he felt inadequate to the duties of so extensive a charge; and, in addition to this, some circumstances occurred, about this time, in connection with what was commonly called "the new measures" in revivals of religion, (in which perhaps nine-tenths of his congregation had as little sympathy as himself,) which occasioned him no small uneasiness, and predisposed him the more readily to listen to overtures look-

ing towards a removal. In February following, he received an urgent request to come to Philadelphia, and administer the Communion to the new church, on the 24th of March, which request he found it convenient to comply with, having occasion to be in Philadelphia about that time on business connected with Princeton College. After this visit, he received an assurance from Mr. Henry and Mr. Bevan that, if he would give any encouragement that he would come to them, a unanimous call to him would undoubtedly be made out. The result was, as appears from a letter addressed to him by Mr. Bevan, on the 23d of April, that such a call *was* made out, the salary offered him being two thousand dollars. This call he accepted, and, the usual course having been gone through in Presbytery, he was released from his pastoral charge. He preached his Farewell Sermon on the 12th of May. The following paragraphs form the conclusion of it.

"Thus I have endeavoured to illustrate the Apostle's farewell advice. Dear Brethren, practically attend to it, and the promise of the text will be yours — 'the God of love and peace will be with you.' And if He is with you, all will be well. He will be with you to bless you. He will soon give you another Pastor after his own heart to go in and out before you, and to distribute unto you the bread of life. He will continue your prosperity as a congregation, and will bless the means of grace, and make them a blessing to your

souls. Then the bereavement which I know many of you deplore, will be more than made up; and the heart of the speaker, though at a distance, will be rejoiced. May the Lord, of his infinite mercy, graciously fulfil this precious promise to you.

"A few words more, and my ministry is closed, and I resign my interesting charge into the hands of the Great Head of the Church, who entrusted me with it, and await the decisions of the final judgment, when we must mutually give an account of the ministry I have exercised among you.

"I bid the Session of this church an affectionate farewell. I entered on my ministry an inexperienced youth, and found a Session who were counsellors indeed. By their wisdom, their counsels and their prayers, they directed, assisted and sustained me. I have lived to bury them all except one dear father, who is still left. I desire heartily to thank God this day for the blessings I have enjoyed, in being favoured with a wise and active Session, between whom and myself there was, so far as I know, for twenty-seven years, mutual and entire confidence. We have consulted and conversed without reserve, and have almost thought as one. Such a blessing is an unspeakable assistance and comfort to a minister.

"On you, dear brethren, will now devolve a great responsibility. On your wisdom, and activity, and fidelity to your trust, under God, depends the prosperity of this Church more than on almost any thing else. Feel your responsibility. Seek light and strength from Heaven. Be men of prayer. Be exemplary in your walk and conversation. Punctually attend and keep up the meetings for prayer and social worship. Act in all your official duties with meekness, but at the same time with promptness, decision and firmness. Respect yourselves if you expect the people to respect you.

"And, dear brethren of the Congregation, respect your elders for the office which they sustain. Pray much for them, and give them your countenance and support in the

performance of their official duties. This is your duty, and the interests of the congregation imperiously require it.

"Brethren of the Congregation, accept my thanks for the many instances of marked kindness I have received at your hands, and have continued to receive until this hour. At parting, I invoke the blessing of Heaven to rest upon you. And my prayers shall still be offered up for your prosperity. In your prosperity I will rejoice; and if adversity should come upon you, (which God, of his infinite mercy forbid,) I will mourn. I ask your prayers for me when I am gone, that God would go with me and bless me, and still make me a blessing to the Kingdom of our dear Saviour.

"Dear Youth — hearken to my parting advice. Give your hearts to God without delay. Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

"Christian brethren, old and young, I repeat to you the apostolic advice — 'Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind'— walk worthy of your high vocation — live constantly for God and Heaven. Many of you are my spiritual children. You may have hereafter many instructors, but you will have but one father. Dearly beloved, ye are my joy and my crown. For you I ought to feel, and trust I ever will feel, a peculiar interest. Live near to God — grow in grace — press forward toward the mark. We part; but we shall soon meet again in another world. May it be at the right hand of the Saviour; and may I then see you all presented faultless before the presence of his glory, and be enabled to say with exceeding joy, "Lord, behold me and the children whom thou hast given me."

"But, my dear hearers, how shall I take my leave of you who are still impenitent, and out of the ark of safety. This is painful work. As far as my ministry is concerned, the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and ye are not saved. And must I leave you in this state, and my ministry prove

to you a savour of death unto death. And he to whom many of you have manifested such marked kindness and friendship, be a witness against you at the bar of God! May the Lord avert such a doom. Once more before we part, I call upon you and beseech you to repent, and accept an offered Saviour, that we may meet and rejoice together in a better world.

"Brethren, my work is done. Here I close up the book of my ministry, until it is opened again by your Judge and mine in the great day of account. Until that meeting, dear brethren, farewell."

Thus closed a most laborious, faithful and useful ministry at Elizabethtown, of twenty-eight years.

## CHAPTER III.

### His Ministry in Connection with the Central Church, Philadelphia.

Dr. McDowell was installed Pastor of the Central Church, Philadelphia, by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the 6th of June, 1833,—the services being performed in what was called the Whitefield Academy or Chapel, where the church had worshipped from the time of its organization. Dr. Engles preached the Installation Sermon, Dr. Neill presided and proposed the constitutional questions; Dr. Miller gave the Charge to the Pastor; and Dr. John Breckenridge the Charge to the People. His ministry here commenced under very auspicious circumstances, the perfect harmony of the congregation combining with the high qualifications and reputation of the Pastor, to give promise of great comfort and usefulness.

But, notwithstanding Dr. McDowell found himself in the midst of a people with whom he had every reason to be satisfied, his affections were by no means withdrawn from the congregation from which he had been separated; he still felt the deepest interest in their welfare, and was on the alert to do every thing in his

power to promote it. The Rev. (afterwards Dr.) Nicholas Murray, then Pastor of a church in Wilkesbarre, Pa., had preached in his pulpit at Elizabethtown, a few months before, in behalf of one of the benevolent objects of the Church, and had attracted much more than ordinary attention. On the same day that Dr. McDowell preached his Farewell Sermon, a committee of the congregation waited on him and requested that he would procure some member of the General Assembly, then about to commence its sessions in Philadelphia, to preach for them on the succeeding Sabbath, and one whom he would consider a suitable person to become his successor. On arriving in Philadelphia, he found that Mr. Murray was there as a delegate to the Assembly, and, from his previous favourable impressions concerning him, he had no hesitation in proposing to him to supply the vacant pulpit. Mr. Murray accepted the invitation; the result of which was that he received an unanimous call to become Dr. McDowell's successor. Being greatly embarrassed in respect to the question of duty in the new circumstances in which, he was now placed, he wrote to the Doctor, earnestly requesting his advice; and the answer, though characterized by proper caution, was nevertheless clearly and decidedly in favour of his accepting the

call. He did accept it, and, by the united request of Mr. Murray and the congregation, Dr. McDowell was present on the occasion of the Installation, and delivered the Charge to the Pastor. His relations with both Mr. Murray and the people were, ever after, of the most intimate and affectionate kind; and his occasional visits at Elizabethtown, which were continued almost to the close of his life, were always most gratefully welcomed, as well by his distinguished successor in the ministry, as by the people whom he had so long and so faithfully served.

On the 23d of February, 1834, the Central Church edifice was opened for public worship, and was dedicated to the service of Almighty God. On that occasion, the Pastor preached in the morning, Dr. Miller in the afternoon, and Dr. Neill in the evening. The following paragraphs formed the conclusion of Dr. McDowell's Dedication Sermon, the text of which was Isaiah, LX, 13.

"As a Church, we are yet in our infancy. The congregation was organized May 21, 1832, in the Franklin Institute on Seventh Street, the Rev. Dr. Aaron W. Leland, of Charleston, S. C., presiding. This was just a year and nine months since. The church was organized a month afterwards,—namely, on the 19th of June, in the Whitefield Academy in Fourth Street; on which occasion the Rev. Dr. Thomas McAuley, now of New York, presided. The Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper was first administered on Sabbath, the 24th of June, 1832; so that the church, as such, has been in existence only twenty months. The congregation have, since that time, worshipped in the Academy on Fourth Street, and have there enjoyed much of the presence of God and of the evidence of his favour, and have gradually and rapidly increased.

"The circumstances which led to the formation of this church are well known to this community, as having been deeply afflictive. But God, in his providence, has overruled for good the separation caused by them, and will render it, we hope, eventually the means of advancing his Kingdom. This people have, under their trials and the great sacrifices to which they have been called, had the approbation of their own consciences, the sympathy and favour of the public in general, and the approbation of God signally expressed by the smiles of his providence, continually prospering them ever since they became a separate people till this day.

"It is well known that the congregation had its origin in the afflictions and death of the Rev Joseph Sanford, late Pastor of the church, of which, under his ministry, they formed a part. Their attachment to him was great, and it was truly merited; for he was an able, faithful, devoted, and highly useful servant of God. This had been proved by his ministry in a very important congregation of which he had the charge before he came to this city, and where he was universally respected and beloved, and eminently useful. And it was further proved during his short but successful ministry in this city. For his age, he had gained, in a remarkable degree, the affection and confidence of his brethren in the ministry; and his praise was very extensively in the churches. And when he fell by death, the stroke was felt and mourned over, not only by this people, but throughout this city, and far and wide through our Church. But I forbear. Your loss was his gain. He was soon called to his

rest and his gracious reward; and not improbably his glorified spirit may be hovering, with ministering angels, over this assembly to-day, rejoicing in the prosperity of his beloved people, and praising God for it.

"On the 22d of last April, just ten months since, the corner stone of this church edifice was laid, with religious solemnity, by the Rev. John Breckenridge. On the same day, the congregation elected the speaker to be their Pastor, who was installed on the 6th of June following. This building is now completed, and we behold in it one of the things mentioned in this discourse, as entering into the beauty and glory of a particular Church. You have a house of worship in which simplicity, order, beauty and richness are united: and you have great reason to-day, with lively gratitude, to make mention of the goodness of God, whose gracious hand has been upon you, prospering the work which He has given you the disposition and the means to undertake and carry forward; that he has kindly preserved the lives and the limbs of the workmen; and that he has enabled you to bring so great a work to a favourable conclusion. And while you give all the glory to the Lord, you owe thanks to the prominent instruments in this work. Your gratitude is due to the building committee, who have gratuitously devoted so much time to the superintendence of it, and have managed it with so much skill and fidelity; and also to the architects who planned, and the workmen who have executed it, with so much taste, wisdom and despatch.

"You have now, Brethren, convened in this edifice for the first time, with a view to dedicate it to that God, who has so signally helped and prospered you, — the God of your fathers and your God. This has already been done in the prayer which we have offered. And now, again, would I, in the name, and on the behalf of the congregation, who have erected this building, dedicate it to the service of the Triune God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be used in his wor-

ship, and for his glory. And may He graciously accept the dedication! May He here record his great name! May his holy and blessed presence ever be vouchsafed in this house, and his glory here be manifested! May his special blessing ever rest upon the assemblies that shall convene for his worship, and of many may it be said, they were born here, and here were fed with the bread of life, and were built up in faith and holiness, and prepared for a place in the temple above!

"This is now the house of God; and may its beauty and glory as a house ever be an apt emblem of the spiritual beauty and glory of this church, which is statedly to worship here. If you would enjoy, and continue to enjoy, the presence and blessing of God, and secure them to your children, and children's children, you must possess, maintain and exhibit those spiritual ornaments of a church, which have been presented, — namely, soundness in the faith, gospel discipline, peace and love, and patient holiness. These spiritual ornaments, which, in the sight of God are of far higher value than a splendid house of worship, I hope you, as a church, possess. Continue to prize and cherish them, and guard against every thing which may mar their beauty or lessen their attractiveness. For if corrupt doctrines should be taught from this desk, and be received by the people, if discipline should be neglected and the openly scandalous be retained in the bosom of the church; if you should become divided into irreconcilable factions and parties; or if professing Christians should generally become lukewarm and formal; though this house may still stand beautiful and glorious in appearance, your real beauty as a church will be defaced, and your real glory will have departed from you. Brethren, sedulously guard against these things, and warn your children against them. Maintain soundness of doctrine. While you exercise charity towards other denominations who may

differ from you in non-essential points, do you, as a church, ever adhere strictly to the doctrines taught in the standards which you profess to adopt — they are, we believe, the truths of God's word. Guard the doctrines of this church. It is an age of innovation and error. Let a departure from our standards never be countenanced by those who may stand in the place which I now occupy.

"Maintain the order of Christ's house. Let the Session of this church ever be faithful in the due performance of gospel discipline, and let the church encourage and support them in it. Let no root of bitterness ever be tolerated among you. Be at peace among yourselves, and ever study the things which make for peace. And by holy obedience to the precepts of the Gospel, glorify God, and adorn the religion of Christ. And teach these things to your children also.

"Dear brethren, while you to-day dedicate this house to the God of your fathers, dedicate yourselves also anew to His service. Let the heart of each one of you be consecrated as a temple of the Holy Ghost. Let those who are now the children of God devote themselves afresh to his service, and, with their entrance into this new house of worship, begin their lives anew, by a degree of holy living and of zeal for Christ which they never before manifested.

"And let those who have never yet given their hearts to God, see to it that this interesting occasion marks their entrance upon a new life. Let them to-day form the resolution that they will no longer be mere external worshippers, but that they will, without delay, seek the Lord, give him their hearts, and henceforth worship him in spirit and in truth. May the Lord, of his infinite mercy, incline your hearts so to act.

"And may He fill this house with his glory, and make it his perpetual rest and dwelling place. May He abundantly bless the provisions of this his house, and here satisfy his poor with bread; may He here clothe his ministers with salva-

tion, and cause his saints to shout for joy; and may many sons and daughters here be born to God, and be fed and fitted for immortal glory."

In the winter of 1834–35, Dr. McDowell was prostrated by severe illness, which it was feared, for a short time, would have a fatal termination. The following letter to his brother Benjamin, written after he had partially recovered, is interesting not merely as giving an account of his illness, but as indicating the remarkable success of his new enterprise, as well as some of his proclivities in respect to the then existing state of things in the Church.

PHILADELPHIA, *March* 11, 1835.

MY DEAR BROTHER :

It is a long time since I heard from you, as it probably is since you have heard from us. I am now confined to a sick room, where I have been nearly three weeks. After preaching on Sabbath, February 22d, I was taken, in the course of the following night, severely sick. My disease proved to be peripneumony or inflammation of the lungs. Until the next Sabbath night, I was exceedingly ill, and my physicians pronounced my case a very critical one. Two physicians were in attendance, both of whom were unwearied in their attentions and prompt in their prescriptions. By the blessing of God, my disease yielded in just one week from the time I was taken. Since that time I have been gradually recovering, though I am still quite weak. As soon as the weather will permit, I hope to go out. I have been labouring diligently among my people during the winter, and among other things have been engaged in pastoral visiting from house to house, conversing and praying with every family—a new

thing, so far as I can learn, in this city. I have had much to encourage me lately in my labours. There has been, and is, I think, among my people, a more than ordinary degree of seriousness. Our stated season for the Communion would have been next Sabbath, but it has been put off on account of my illness. I hope we shall receive considerable additions from the world. At our last Communion eight were admitted on examination, besides a number on certificate. The additions on certificate have averaged nearly twenty at each Communion for a year past. My congregation has greatly increased. For several months there has not been a single pew to be got in the lower part of the house, and most of the seats in the gallery are also taken. I have, I suppose, as large a congregation as there is in the city, and I begin to feel identified with them, as I did with my people at Elizabethtown. The meeting of the General Assembly at Pittsburgh, is fast approaching, but I doubt whether I shall attend it; though if I do not, I must resign my office of Permanent Clerk. My soul abhors the ecclesiastical war that is going on; and I wish to be away from it. I disapprove the policy that has for years been pursued by a few of the orthodox party. I love the Confession of Faith, every line of it, and I love Presbyterianism; and I challenge any man to point to any sentiment I ever wrote or uttered, that is not in strict accordance with it. But I must close by subscribing myself

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN McDOWELL.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Murray to Dr. McDowell, dated at Elizabethtown, five days after the preceding, is illustrative of the strong regard which the people of his former charge still cherished towards him.

"When we heard of your illness a few days since, we all felt greatly intererested in what might be the result; and we feel relieved and thankful to God that, by his good providence, he has brought it to a favourable termination. May your health be perfectly restored, and may you be spared to be a lasting blessing to our wounded and distracted Church. Be assured that we all feel deeply interested in you here. From a hundred family altars, I have no doubt that prayer was made for your recovery."

Dr. Miller, in a letter of the same date, wrote to him as follows.

"Your very welcome letter of Saturday reached me this afternoon. I say *welcome*, because a letter from you is always welcome, but as a practical testimony that you are recovering from your late severe illness, it was doubly welcome. We all unite in returning thanks to God for your restoration, and trust that you are given back to us in rich mercy to yourself, your family, and the cause of Christ in our land. All my family join with me in affectionate congratulations on the joyful event."

There had been manifested, for several years, in the General Assembly, a difference of opinion and feeling on a variety of matters pertaining to the interests of the Church, which by this time seriously threatened a disruption of the body. Dr. McDowell, not from any want of courage, but from a sober conviction of duty, felt constrained to occupy an intermediate position between the two parties—while he did not question the reality of many of the evils complained of by the Old

School, he did not sympathize in the extreme measures (as he regarded them) which were proposed for their removal; and, above all, he deprecated any thing that looked towards an ultimate division of the Church. The General Assembly of 1836 it was expected on all hands would have a very stormy session; and so painfully was Dr. McDowell exercised in the prospect, that he had, at one time, as intimated in a preceding letter, well nigh made up his mind not to be present, though his absence must necessarily have involved the resignation of his office as Permanent Clerk; but, upon mature reflection, he came to the conclusion that he could not stay away in consistency with his duty. At this meeting Dr. Ezra Stiles Ely resigned his office as Stated Clerk, and each party immediately placed a candidate in nomination. The result, however, of a united consultation was that both candidates were withdrawn, in favour of Dr. McDowell, in whom both parties had confidence; and he was chosen unanimously. The Assembly voted not to choose another Permanent Clerk at that meeting, so that Dr. McDowell had the double burden of both Permanent Clerk and Stated Clerk devolved upon him. The following extract of a letter written to his brother Benjamin, while the Assembly was in session, reveals the state of his

mind in respect to the events which were then passing.

"Yesterday and to-day, the Assembly have been engaged on the subject of the transfer of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, and the Assembly engaging in Foreign Missions. The debate has been dignified, able and deeply interesting; and, in the course of it, plain intimations have been given of a disposition to divide our Church. I fear this will be the case. I tremble at the prospect; but, unless the Lord interpose, this Assembly will not rise until some measures are taken to effect this object. If it would stop with the ministers, I would not so deeply deplore it; but it will divide, to a great extent, our individual churches throughout the land. A proposition is now before the Committee of Overtures to take steps for a division on the ground of doctrine. The subject of Slavery, too, must come up — numerous petitions in reference to it are already before the Committee; and the extreme sensitiveness which the Southern Commissioners manifest in relation to it, seems to me to look towards a separation, not far distant, of the North from the South. My only comfort in this momentous crisis is that 'the Lord reigns.'"

In a letter to the same brother, dated May 1, 1837, two or three weeks before the General Assembly was to convene, he writes as follows:

"The approaching Assembly is looked to by many as an exceedingly important crisis in our Church matters. It probably will be so; and great responsibility rests upon those of whom the Assembly will be composed. Which of the two great parties into which, unhappily, our Church is divided, will be the majority in the Assembly, I cannot predict. I think it very doubtful; and the probability is that

the majority will be very small on either side. I do not believe there will be a division. There may be a secession of a few ultra uneasy spirits; and if a few on both sides were gone, I should rejoice, and think that then we could have peace and the blessing of God."

In a letter written to the same brother, under date of January 2, 1838, he says:

"I have scarcely spoken on the subject of the difficulties in our Church, for several months. I am endeavouring this winter to devote myself exclusively to my people. I am engaged in pastoral visiting, and have, since the 1st of November, visited a hundred families, and have conversed and prayed with the members of each of them. I have a noble Bible Class weekly, at which from three to four hundred attend. There is, I think, an increase of seriousness among us; and this is the case, I hope, in the city generally; though we have in none of our churches any thing like a revival."

At the General Assembly of 1838, Dr. McDowell was deeply wounded by the adoption of a Report of a Committee on an alleged discrepancy between the printed and manuscript minutes of the preceding Assembly. Though he did not believe that any injury was intended, yet he felt himself placed in so delicate and equivocal an attitude that he could not, in consistency with his convictions of what was due to self-respect, consent, under the circumstances, to retain the office of Stated Clerk any longer; and, accordingly, he addressed a letter to the Moderator, the

Rev. Dr. Plumer, tendering his resignation. Though it does not appear that his communication came before the Assembly, it was the occasion of the following Resolution being passed unanimously: "For the purpose of preventing any misconception of the intention of the Assembly in adopting the Report of the Committee on the omission of certain Minutes of the last Assembly, and supplying a defect in that Report, it is Resolved that neither the Committee of Revision nor the Stated Clerk are blamed, nor is any imputation cast upon them, directly or indirectly, as it is believed that all concerned acted conscientiously, according to their views of duty, and the Assembly cherish undiminished confidence in the ability and fidelity of the Stated Clerk." This explanatory action relieved Dr. McDowell of all embarrassment, and he continued in the discharge of the duties of his office.

Notwithstanding Dr. McDowell's inability to endorse the doings of the General Assembly of 1837 and 1838, by which the division of the Church was brought about,—believing, as he did, that the measures were unconstitutional and revolutionary,—when the division was once accomplished, he fell in heartily with the Old School, and ever afterwards was devoted to the interests of that branch of the Church. It ap-

pears from letters that he wrote while the legal process, growing out of the division, was pending, that his sympathies were all in one direction; and when the final result was made known, no one seems to have rejoiced in it more than himself.

In September, 1837, Dr. McDowell preached the Annual Sermon before the American Board of Foreign Missions, at Newark, N. J., which was published. In 1839, he published his System of Theology, in two volumes, duodecimo, in a form adapted to Bible classes.

The following letter addressed to Dr. McDowell, by a daughter of Governor Aaron Ogden, a few days before her father's death, furnishes a striking attestation to his sympathy and fidelity as a Pastor.

JERSEY CITY, *March* 20, 1864.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

Aware of the deep interest you have ever manifested towards our family, and knowing by experience that you are a friend ever ready to sympathize in our sorrows, it is quite in unison with my present feelings to write you, and give a particular account of the alarming illness under which my dear father has been for some time labouring.

Early in the winter he had a very severe attack of gout, which confined him to his room for several weeks, but he so far recovered from this as to be able to walk and ride out occasionally in pleasant weather. About six weeks since he was very suddenly seized with paralysis, which alarmed us

very much; but the timely aid of a physician seemed to prevent the consequences we so much apprehended, although it was very evident that his constitution had received a severe shock. Two weeks since he was visited with a second attack, by which his brain became so much affected that he constantly mistakes those of his family who are around him for some other persons. He talks continually of events long since past, but seems to have no recollection of recent occurrences. I scarcely ever enter his room that he does not make some inquiries about you — he seems to have an idea that you are still his Pastor, and often asks if Dr. McDowell will not come and visit him, and pray with him. A few days since he called me to his bedside, and observed that he must soon leave us, and felt how hard it would be to part with his children, and added,— 'Give my kind regards to Dr. McDowell, and tell him I remembered him to the very last.' I yesterday told him I intended writing to you shortly, and asked him if he had any message to send you. 'Yes,' he replied, while the tears rolled down his cheeks, 'ask Dr. McDowell to remember me in his prayers, and tell him that I shall never forget him.'

The day we thought him so ill, and he seemed so anxious to see you, we sent for a clergyman belonging to this place, who conversed and prayed with him, and it appeared to compose and comfort him very much. I often wish you were nearer to us that he might once more have an opportunity of seeing you. The physicians give us no encouragement to hope that he will recover. They say that he may possibly continue some time, or he may be taken off very suddenly. We have certainly great cause of thankfulness that the Lord has continued him to us so long; but still the idea of parting under any circumstances is extremely painful. My fervent prayer is that we may be prepared for whatever an all-wise Providence is preparing for us.

Believe me your very sincere friend,

MARY C. BARBER.

At the meeting of the General Assembly in 1840, Dr. McDowell resigned his office as Stated Clerk; whereupon the following resolution was unanimously adopted.

"That, although the reason assigned by Dr. McDowell for his resignation is quite sufficient, yet, as he has long and faithfully performed the duties of his office, and is well acquainted with all the routine of business belonging to said office, he be requested to withdraw his resignation; provided he can do so consistently with the paramount duties of a Pastor."

The Doctor, in a letter addressed to the Moderator, (the Rev. Dr. Engles,) gratefully recognized the estimate which the Assembly had placed upon his services; but, in consideration of the great labour and responsibility pertaining to the office, and especially of the necessity it imposed upon him of attending as a witness before Courts, and at all seasons of the year, and, more than all, in view of its manifest interference with his duties as the minister of a large city congregation, he felt himself constrained to decline a longer continuance in the office.

In the summer of 1843, after the office of Secretary of the American Colonization Society had been vacated by the death of Dr. Proudfit, Dr. McDowell was consulted as to the probability of his accepting an appointment to that place; but he did not favour the appointment, and therefore it was not made.

In 1842, owing to some pecuniary embarrassment of the congregation, he generously relinquished five hundred dollars *per annum*, which had, some time before, been added to his salary; for which he received a warm expression of thanks from the Board of Trustees. In 1843, and again in 1844, similar acknowledgments were tendered to him for important services he had rendered for extinguishing the floating debt of the church and increasing its annual revenue.

In the summer of 1844, Dr. McDowell, accompanied by his wife and one daughter, made a journey as far Westward as Lowville, Lewis County, N. Y., the native place of his son-in-law, the Rev. Willard M. Rice. On their way they passed a few days very pleasantly at Saratoga Springs; though they were kept in a state of no small anxiety, during nearly the whole period of their absence, by the reports that were constantly reaching them, of the terrible riots which were taking place in the city of their residence. They found all quiet on their return.

Shortly after Dr. McDowell's return from this journey, he became deeply concerned on discovering that the pecuniary indebtedness of his congregation was much greater than he had supposed, and that the Trustees and leading men of the church were in a state of seri-

ous perplexity in respect to it. This state of things occasioned no small disquietude and agitation for more than a year; until, at length, he was brought to believe that it was his duty to resign his pastoral charge. Accordingly, by his own request, the Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relation on the 20th of November, 1845. The congregation, at their meeting for appointing Commissioners to meet the Presbytery, to show cause, if they had any, why the resignation of Dr. McDowell should not be accepted, rendered the following honourable testimony to his character and services.

"*Resolved*, unanimously, that, in concurring with the wishes of Dr. McDowell, this congregation cherish the most entire and unabated confidence in his piety, zeal and pastoral fidelity, and the most sincere personal regard and affection for him; and that they desire to express their unfeigned gratitude to him for his multiplied labours, and to God, for the measure of success that has attended his ministry, for more than twelve years, in their midst. And they further assure him of the united and hearty wishes of the elders, trustees, communicants, and congregation, for the welfare and comfort of himself and family through life."

## CHAPTER IV.

### From his Leaving the Central Church till his Death.

The disruption of the tie that bound Dr. McDowell to the Central Church seemed to mark a dark epoch in the history of his life. He had indeed a high reputation throughout the whole Church; a reputation which he had earned by a long course not only of pastoral fidelity but of public usefulness; but he had now reached his sixty-sixth year; and, though his vigour of body and mind was still unabated, it was obvious that not many years could elapse before his ability to labour must begin to wane. He was himself deeply sensible of all this; and he saw no prospect of continued ministerial usefulness open before him; while yet his heart was just as much in his work as ever; and withal he was in a measure dependent on his professional labours for the means of supporting his family. He doubted not, however, that the same gracious God who had ordered his lot in such signal mercy hitherto, would care for him still; and he only waited to see the path of duty made clear before he should resume his labours. The day after his relation

to his church ceased, he went to Elizabethtown, where he was met by his old friends with a cordial greeting and the warmest sympathy. A vigorous effort was made about this time to secure his settlement at Metuchin; and proposals were also made to him to lead in the establishment of an Old School Presbyterian Church in Newark; but he could not feel that the finger of Providence pointed in either of these directions. On his return to Philadelphia, he was presented with a petition, signed by a hundred and ten of the members of the congregation from which he had just been separated, that he would continue his labours with the view of establishing a new church. He at once entered into their views, and commenced preaching at the old Fourth Street (Whitefield) Academy, where he continued for a year — just as he had done twelve years before, while the Central Church was being built. His first sermon was preached on the 14th of December, from the text,— "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Two men, who had always sat unconcerned under his ministry in the Central Church, were first brought to serious reflection under this sermon. When the movement was first made towards a new church-organization, it met with little favour outside of the circle in which it was

started; but the persevering zeal of those more immediately concerned, in connection with the hearty co-operation of Dr. McDowell, overcame all obstacles, and very quickly secured the object. On the 31st of December, those who had enlisted in the new enterprise, met and unanimously resolved to apply to the Presbytery for organization as a Church; and for this purpose drew up a petition, addressed to the Presbytery, and appointed a committee to present it. This petition was signed by one hundred and thirty-six persons who had been under his pastoral charge in the Central Church; ninety of whom were communicants. It was presented to the Presbytery the next week, (January 6, 1846); and, after much deliberation, the Presbytery unanimously resolved to grant the petition, and appointed a committee consisting of Doctors Cuyler and McDowell, and Mr. Andrew Symington, Elder, to organize the church.

On the 18th of January, the church was duly organized, with eighty-seven communicants; two of whom were ordained Ruling Elders. The Church took the name of the Spring Garden Presbyterian Church. Three days after, the congregation met and voted a unanimous call to Dr. McDowell to become their Pastor. He accepted the call, and was installed on

the 3d of February. The Sermon on the occasion was preached by Dr. Thomas L. Janeway; Dr. Cuyler presided, and gave the Charge to the Pastor; and the Rev. Archibald Tudehope gave the Charge to the People. The Installation took place, as his previous Installation had done, in the Whitefield Chapel.

The next thing to be done was to provide the means for securing a lot and erecting a house of worship. The members of the new congregation, though generally far from being in affluent circumstances, were ready to contribute in aid of the enterprise to the utmost limit of their ability; but they were obliged to look abroad mainly for the means of accomplishing their object. Dr. McDowell's extensive acquaintance and great popularity in Philadelphia rendered it an easy matter for him to obtain liberal contributions not only from his own but other denominations; but, notwithstanding these applications were generally highly successful, there was a large deficiency to be made up from other sources; and this was done chiefly by his friends in Elizabethtown, Newark and New York. The lot having been purchased, and all the previous arrangements made, the corner-stone of the new edifice was laid, with appropriate services, on the 6th of June. On the 16th of May, 1847, a little less

than a year from the commencement of the work, the edifice was solemnly dedicated to the worship and service of God. On that day, Dr. McDowell preached in the morning; Dr. Willis Lord, then of Philadelphia, in the afternoon; and Dr. Van Arsdale, of the Reformed Dutch Church, in the evening.

From this time the congregation enjoyed an uninterrupted course of prosperity for about four years — it was receiving frequent additions, and thus growing in influence and numerical strength, while the blessing of God evidently attended, in a high degree, the ministration of the word. But, at the end of that period, it was overtaken by a fearful calamity, which seemed to bring a deep shade over its prospects. On the 17th of March, 1851, a snow storm commenced, which continued, with great severity, through the following night. The snow, being wet and heavy, had accumulated so largely upon the roof of the church that the building fell under the weight. The side walls fell out each way nearly to the floor; the roof came down crushing the pews; and the whole was a frightful scene of desolation. It was a great mercy, however, that no one was injured, either in the house or out of it. Dr. McDowell, though deeply affected by this dispensation of Providence, never yielded to des-

pondency for a moment — his unwavering faith, his indomitable strength of purpose, triumphed; and, like Nehemiah of old, he said, — "Let us arise and build." The disaster awakened a very general sympathy throughout the city; and congregations of different denominations volunteered the loan of their church edifices, for the afternoon, so long as the necessity might exist. The following very gratifying note was addressed to Dr. McDowell, at this time, by the Rector and Wardens of the Church of the Nativity.

Rev. Sir. Our Respected Neighbour:

Learning, with deep regret, the downfall, last night, of the edifice in which you are wont to worship God, the Rector and Wardens of the Nativity Church tender to you the exclusive use of that place of worship on the afternoons of Sunday, and of any week-day you may select, with the assurance of a cordial welcome to any of the people of your charge who may, at other times, see fit to unite with us in adoring our Father in Heaven, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

Tuesday, 9 a. m., *March* 18, 1851.

There were also very liberal contributions voluntarily made, from churches of different denominations in Philadelphia, towards repairing the desolation occasioned by this distressing casualty. Not a few private individuals in other places also volunteered their aid, among whom was Dr. Archibald Alexander, whose contribution was accompanied by the following characteristic letter.

PRINCETON, *March* 22, 1851.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

I could send you abundant expressions of sympathy, but these would not aid in repairing the loss you have sustained —I therefore send you ten dollars, which was the sum I contributed towards the erection of the building.

Almost every one, on hearing of the disaster, exclaims, "What a mercy it fell when no one was within!"

I think I heard you say that one of the happiest periods of your life was the time spent in soliciting funds for this church. The same pleasure I trust you will experience again; for I doubt not but you will find many disposed to repeat their former contributions. I am very truly yours,

A. ALEXANDER.

Dr. McDowell was the master-spirit in the rebuilding, as he had been in the original building, of the church; and he found it even more easy now than before to procure the requisite pecuniary aid for the accomplishment of his object. The rebuilding commenced almost immediately, under the most favourable auspices, and at an expense of about ten thousand dollars, was ready to be re-occupied in about six months and a half. During the progress of the work, the congregation worshipped in the Spring Garden Commissioners' Hall. On the 5th of October, 1851, it was re-opened and re-dedicated to the purposes for which it was built. On that day, the Pastor preached in the morning, Dr. Murray, of Elizabethtown, in the afternoon, and Dr. Boardman in the evening.

One of Dr. McDowell's most intimate and beloved friends was Dr. Archibald Alexander. In September, 1851, this venerable man was attacked with a serious illness, from which he soon became satisfied that he should never recover. In anticipation of his death he, with characteristic thoughtfulness, indicated his wishes in respect to the arrangements for his Funeral, and among other things, designated Dr. McDowell to preach the Funeral Sermon. In connection with this, he left a special request that there should be no eulogy pronounced upon him, but that the sermon should be a simple exhibition of Divine truth, suited to comfort mourners, and edify and profit all. Dr. McDowell adhered sacredly to the expressed wish of his friend, and preached a sermon which could not have wounded his delicacy if he had heard every word of it.

In April, 1852, the First Church in Elizabethtown, where Dr. McDowell had, for so many years, exercised his ministry, having been thoroughly renovated, was re-entered with appropriate services. Dr. Murray took care to secure the aid of his predecessor for one part of the day, and his presence gave great additional interest to the occasion.

The following letter was addressed to his intimate friend, William M. Halstead, Esq., of New York, at a

time when the latter was suffering from a severe illness.

PHILADELPHIA, *January* 18, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Through the medium of the New York Observer, I have heard of your illness, and I write to express my sincere sympathy for you in your affliction, and for your family who are afflicted with you. My prayer is that your life may be spared, and that you may be restored to health, and still live to bless your family and be useful in the Church and to the world. Your life has been one of great usefulness, for which many have been thankful. God forbid that I should mention this by way of flattery. You would, I have no doubt, be the first to disapprove of any thing that would lead to self-glorying. But I mention it to the praise and glory of Divine grace, which has been manifested in you. For who maketh us to differ, and what have we that we have not received? God early called you into His Kingdom, and gave you a heart conformed to his will. He has prospered you in your worldly business, bestowing upon you abundance of this world's goods, and has given you a heart to use it for His glory, for the advancement of the Kingdom of the precious Redeemer, and for the good of your fellow-men; and to Him I have no doubt you ascribe all the glory. My prayer is—and I am confident it is the prayer of many—that the life which God has seen fit to make thus useful, may still be prolonged to his glory. We would say the Kingdom of Christ has need of you, but if our Heavenly Father has a higher sphere for you to glorify Him in, we ought to say "Let His will be done." He can, and we believe He will, in such a case, raise up others to take your place in the Church militant. Though the servants of the Lord die, His Church will live.

My dear friend, it is a blessed truth, in all our circumstances, that the Lord reigneth. If there is any passage in the precious Bible, which has comforted me in seasons of

darkness and trial, it is this (Ps. XCVII, 1), "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." He reigns in righteousness, in wisdom, and in covenant faithfulness to his people. And why should we not rejoice that we are in the hands of such a God, and that He arranges every thing in respect to us? And it is a comforting truth that afflictions are no evidence of his displeasure. On the contrary, we read in His word (Heb. XII, 6), "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Oh how precious is the word of God in the time of trouble! I need not say again, Let the precious truths of God's word now comfort you, and be your song in this your night of adversity. I pray that the Lord may be with your dear wife also in this time of her affliction, and support and comfort her, prepare her for all his will, and sanctify to her all the dealings of his hand. Since I saw an account of your illness, I have heard nothing concerning you, though we have made diligent and earnest inquiry. If I could, it would be a great gratification to me to visit you while you are under the rod. But this mournful pleasure seems to be denied to me. God has been very merciful to me—I am now an old man, and have entered my fiftieth year as a Pastor in health, and am still enabled to perform as much ministerial labour as perhaps I ever did. But I ought to feel that the time must be near when I must give an account of my stewardship. If, my dear friend, we meet not in this world, may we meet in Heaven.

Affectionately yours,
JOHN McDOWELL.

The following letter addressed to Dr. McDowell, by the Hon. Joseph Allison, LL. D., on occasion of asking for his certificate of dismission to another church, contains a high and cordial testimony to the excellent condition of the Doctor's Church, and to his admirable qualities as a Pastor.

Philadelphia, *December* 20, 1854.

My Dear Doctor:

The Communion season of the Hamiltonville Presbyterian Church is again approaching, at which time we think it will be proper to hand in our certificates of church-membership. It is already seven months since our removal from Spring Garden, during which period we have been attending the Church of which the Rev. Mr. Butler is Pastor. Will you be good enough to send me the certificate of dismissal for Mrs. Allison and myself.

I would have taken our dismissal to the Hamiltonville Church before, but for a reluctance to sever a church connection, which, for six years, has continued, without interruption, to be a source of rich enjoyment to us. If any future church relations shall be as pleasant as these have been, I shall have reason to congratulate myself, though perhaps this is scarcely to be expected; for I doubt whether there are many churches pervaded by so general a feeling of kindness, whose members manifest so much of the spirit of their Master in their regard for each other, and who have been preserved, to so great an extent, from strife and contention, which so often retard the prosperity of the Church, and destroy the pleasure of Christian intercourse. It is my earnest desire that the good feeling so long prevalent in the Spring Garden Church may long continue, as one of its pre-eminent claims to the respect of the community in the midst of which it is planted; and because I know that to you it must be a great comfort that this child of your old age has, in this respect, been so true to itself; and, in the preservation of its integrity as a Church of Christ, casting out discord as an unclean spirit, it gives the best assurance of its future prosperity and success.

But this is not the only cause for hesitation in leaving for a new Christian home — to you personally I have become much attached, and if Providence had so ordered, it would have been a source of no little pleasure to have remained

permanently under your charge as my spiritual instructor and guide. But wherever I am, I shall ever cherish towards you the liveliest feelings of confidence and regard; and permit me to hope that your days of usefulness on earth may be prolonged, as one honoured of God in the cause of the Master you have so long and faithfully served, and that we may at last meet, when the trials of life shall have ended, where sin and sorrow shall have no place, and where the enjoyment of God shall constitute the happiness of those whose sins have been washed away in the atoning blood of Christ our Lord. I am, Dear Sir, affectionately yours,

JOSEPH ALLISON.

On the 31st of December, 1854, Dr. McDowell delivered, in the Spring Garden Church, a Sermon on occasion of his having completed fifty years in the ministry. He occupied both the morning and the afternoon in its delivery, and had a very large and deeply interested congregation in attendance. At a stated meeting of the Presbytery to which he belonged, which occurred on the Tuesday following, they requested him to repeat it in their hearing; which he accordingly did, though in a somewhat abridged form, the next evening, in the Church on Penn Square. On the 14th of January, by request of the Pastor and Session of the First Church in Elizabethtown, he repeated it there also, occupying, as in his own pulpit, both parts of the day in the delivery. The Sermon contained an outline of the history of his life, and

especially of his ministry, and probably none listened to it with more intense interest than the elder portion of his congregation at Elizabethtown. The Sermon was published, and must possess an enduring value, as forming an interesting part of the history of the Presbyterian Church.

The following letter, addressed by Dr. McDowell to Miss Bowlby, a young lady who had been a member of his Church in Philadelphia, but had subsequently removed to Brooklyn, is specially interesting as having been written in the midst of the great revival of 1857--58.

PHILADELPHIA, *March* 27, 1858.

MY DEAR EMILY:

Your kind letter has been received, and I thank you for it. I wrote to you not long since, and I hope you received the letter, though you make no mention of it. I find you are about removing from Brooklyn. Truly this is a changing world. I hope our pilgrimage here may terminate in the rest that remaineth for the people of God. When you get settled, I shall be glad to hear from you, and to know where to address you. I hope it may be where you will have ready access to the public means of grace, which I know you highly prize. I should have rejoiced if it had pleased Providence that you and your family should have been located again in Philadelphia.

It is a very peculiar and wonderful day in regard to religion. The influence is very extensive, pervading a great part of our country, especially our large cities. There is in this city a very general attention, at least externally, to

religious things. The order of the day is attendance on public worship. A great many houses of worship and other places are open daily for prayer and exhortation, and some of them for regular preaching; and they are attended by crowds. The most noted of these places is Jaynes' Hall, in Chestnut Street, below Seventh, — one of the largest rooms in our city. There has been, for some time there, a prayer-meeting every day, at twelve o'clock, and preaching at four o'clock by different clergymen. About three thousand people attend these meetings daily. Many other places are open every day, and are crowded. How many real conversions there are I cannot tell; but I have no doubt the Kingdom of Christ will be extended by these movements. As far as I know, silence and order prevail in a remarkable degree. In regard to my own congregation, we have a good attendance at our regular meetings and solemn attention; and I know of a few seriously inquiring, but nothing very special. We have recently had our Communion, and received four on examination, — three of them young men. I informed you, I think, in my last letter, that, as a congregation, we are out of debt. The number of our communicants is now nearly three hundred. Truly the Lord has been good to us.

I should delight to see you all, but my day for going abroad much is past. Your affectionate friend,

JOHN McDOWELL.

In April, 1859, Dr. McDowell suffered a severe domestic affliction in the death of a much loved daughter, (Susan,) who had suffered for many years from Epilepsy. How constantly she was in her father's thoughts through this long period of suffering is manifest from the fact that, in almost all the letters that he addressed to his intimate friends during this time,

there is some distinct reference to her condition. The following letter to Miss Bowlby, containing an account of his daughter's death, which occurred on the 8th of April, 1859, shows how deeply his heart was smitten by the bereavement.

PHILADELPHIA, *June* 6, 1859.

MY DEAR EMILY:

Your kind letter was received on Saturday, and I hasten to answer it. God, in his Providence, has made a great change in my family. Our loved and long and greatly afflicted daughter has finished her life of suffering, and has gone, we have no doubt, to the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

She was a great and constant sufferer. Her disease increased as she advanced in years, and required increasing care and watchfulness night and day. Religion was her daily business and delight, and she evidently grew in grace till the close of life. She has been, for several months, gradually becoming weaker, until nature, exhausted, yielded to the stroke of death. She died easily. When she was able she read much, and her reading was of the decidedly religious and devotional kind. We have found, since her death, in the books she read, a great many passages suited to her situation, marked with a pencil. And we have found her daily journal, breathing a remarkable spirit of piety. While we mourn her departure, we have good reason to thank God for many peculiar mercies. It was a great mercy that she did not lose her reason, which we had long feared would be the case. It was a great mercy that she did not die in dreadful convulsions, of which there seemed to us a great probability. She departed like one going to sleep. It was also a very great mercy that her parents were spared to take care of her while she lived. And, above all, it was an unspeakable

mercy that she so lived and died as to give assurance that our loss is her unspeakable gain. She slept much in the last few days of her illness, and said but little. In the evening commencing the night on which she died, she awoke from sleep, and, without looking at any of us, raised her eyes upwards, and uttered this remarkable prayer.

"Heavenly Father, let me be with Thee all the day long. Dear Saviour, let me be with Thee all the day long. Take me to Heaven; let me be there this night—Amen."

She then went to sleep again; and, after this, uttered no more intelligible sentences. She died at three o'clock, and was buried, on the following Monday afternoon, in the Woodlands Cemetery. Her corpse was one of the most beautiful I ever beheld. To her emphatically applied the lines of Whitefield —

"Ah lovely appearance of death,
No sight upon earth is so fair;
Not all the gay pageants that breathe,
Can with a dead body compare."

Her Funeral was very numerously attended, and great respect for her memory was manifested. Dr. Boardman delivered an appropriate and excellent Address on the occasion. You will pardon me for going so much into detail in this account of my dear daughter's death—I have been prompted to it by my knowledge of the deep interest you felt in her, and of your sympathy in our affliction.

Affectionately yours,
JOHN McDOWELL.

Dr. McDowell continued in the regular discharge of most of his duties as a minister, with but little perceptible waning of any of his faculties, until the spring of 1858, when, at a meeting of the Session of his church, he made to them, in substance, the follow-

ing verbal communication:—"You are my constitutional advisers. There is a subject on which I wish to confer with you confidentially. I am an old man. It is natural that I should partake of the infirmities incident to old age. Many of the duties of a Pastor, which have long been my delight, I am compelled to omit. Family visitations and other duties I cannot attend to as formerly. I wish to ask if you think I ought to resign my charge." To this inquiry the members of the Session unanimously replied that it was neither their wish, nor, so far as they knew, the wish of any part of the congregation that he should resign; and that their belief was that it would be an unwelcome subject to propose to them. On the whole, the Session advised decidedly to let things remain as they were until there should be some more marked necessity for a change. In the spring of 1859, the Doctor again brought the subject to the notice of his Session, expressing his deep conviction that the time had come when decisive action upon it could not be safely or properly delayed, as he felt himself utterly unable to preach twice on the Sabbath, or to discharge all the other duties devolving upon him. To this appeal the Session could not but listen; and, accordingly, they requested him to avail himself of such local

aid as he might be able to command until the way should be clear for bringing the whole subject before the congregation. On the 2d of November following, the congregation met and unanimously adopted the following Resolutions :—

"1. That this congregation acknowledges with gratitude the goodness of God manifested to us in sparing the life and continuing the usefulness of our beloved Pastor, the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., through a period of nearly eighty years, and in owning him as a chosen servant of the Lord by giving to him many souls as seals of his ministry; and that we now desire to express our continued confidence in his piety, and zeal, and devotedness to the proper work of the ministry, and in the performance of all the duties incident to the pastoral office.

"2. That it is our desire that the wishes of our Pastor be complied with; and that we now authorize and request the Session of this church to adopt such measures as shall enable us to make a wise and judicious choice of a man to 'break unto us the bread of life,' in conjunction with our aged Pastor."

In pursuance of this second Resolution, measures were immediately taken to secure a Colleague Pastor; which resulted in the settlement of the Rev. Morris C. Sutphen, in May, 1860; an arrangement in which the Doctor expressed his most hearty concurrence. So long as the colleagueship continued, the younger Pastor always manifested the most deferential regard to the feelings and wishes of his venerable associate

in the ministry, while the elder was fully satisfied that he could leave his congregation in no better hands than those in which he was actually leaving them.

At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Princeton Theological Seminary, held in April, 1860, Dr. McDowell tendered his resignation of the office of Secretary of the Board. Whereupon the Board adopted the following resolutions:

"1. That Dr. McDowell's resignation be accepted.

"2. That this Board, under a deep sense of their obligations for his long continued and faithful services, as their Secretary, tender to him their grateful acknowledgments, and affectionate wishes for his continued health and happiness."

The following letter was addressed, by Dr. McDowell, to Miss Mary Miller, daughter of the late Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton, on occasion of the death of her mother.

PHILADELPHIA, *February* 11, 1861.

MY DEAR MISS MILLER:

Since I last saw you, your excellent mother has been removed by death. This event, though not unexpected, her children must deeply feel; and you especially as the one who lived with her to the last. With my whole heart I sympathize with you and the other children in this bereavement. It would have afforded me a mournful pleasure to have been with you at the funeral; but my advanced age and feeble health render it not prudent for me to go so far from home at this inclement and uncertain season of the year. You are, my dear friend, in affliction, and it is right that you

should feel it. But you have great reason to be comforted and to be thankful. The Lord has spared your mother, and continued her with you to a good old age. Her departure must, according to the course of nature, have been looked for. She has spent a long life of usefulness, and has been brought into the Heavenly garner, as a shock of corn in its season, fully ripe. She has been a blessing to her children and to the Church of God, and she has now gone to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. May the grace of God be sufficient for you in this time of need. And may his rich blessing rest upon you, and your dear sister, and respected brothers; and may you all follow her as she followed Christ; and may you all at last join her and your venerated father in the Paradise of God above.

Your affectionate and sympathizing friend,

JOHN McDOWELL.

Dr. McDowell, having been informed that a most respectable lady, a resident of Ohio, whose early years were passed under his ministry, had nearly reached the fiftieth anniversary of her marriage, which was to be celebrated by a Golden Wedding, addressed to her the following letter with reference to that event.

PHILADELPHIA, *May* 30, 1861.

MY DEAR MADAM:

I was surprized to learn from the letter of your son that fifty years had passed since I had the pleasure of uniting you in marriage to your excellent husband, Mr. H——, and that you and your children expect to celebrate your *Golden Wedding*, as it is called, on the 17th of June. Truly time is fleeting and we ought diligently to improve it as it flies.

I remember you as a young lady, and a lamb of my flock, in the first years of my ministry. The recollection of the

acquaintance I had with you at that time is still precious. I knew you intimately when you first began to seek the Lord, and had the happiness then frequently to converse with you, and to direct your anxious and inquiring mind to the only hope, the Saviour of sinners. I rejoiced with you and in you, when, as subsequent time has proved, you truly embraced Him. I received you to the church, and, for some time afterwards, witnessed your humble walk with God and devotion to his service; and since, I have heard of you as adorning, through grace, the profession you made in early life.

I had the pleasure to marry you to a man whom I highly respected, and with whom I anticipated you would have a useful and happy life. And, as far as I have heard, I have not been disappointed.

God, my dear friend, has been peculiarly gracious to you. He called you in early life into his kingdom. He has kept you in the narrow way; and has enabled you to grow in grace. He has given you a large family, all of whom, I rejoice to learn, are hopefully pious. He has long preserved you to be useful, and has brought you to a period which very few live to see,— the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of your marriage. Truly, you have reason to say,—"Bless the Lord, O my soul." May the evening of your days be serene and useful; and, when the time of your departure comes, may your sun set without a cloud. May both you and your husband be brought into the Heavenly garner, as shocks of corn in their season fully ripe; and may the blessing of your covenant God rest upon your children, and children's children, for many generations to come!

A word about myself and family may not be deemed intrusive on this occasion. I have now been married to the wife of my youth more than fifty-six years. Through the rich grace of God, my labours have been blessed, especially in Elizabethtown, greatly blessed. I am still a Pastor. I feel the weakness of advanced years, but am still able to

preach, and generally do preach, once on the Sabbath. My people have kindly given me a colleague,— a promising young man.

In conclusion, I would again invoke the blessing of God upon you, and your husband, and children. My wife requests to be affectionately remembered to you.

From your early and affectionate friend,

JOHN McDOWELL.

Dr. McDowell, for some time previous to his death, suffered from a difficulty of articulation. This discovered itself first while he was conducting the services of the sanctuary. He had gone through the preparatory service, announced his text, and was proceeding with his discourse, when his voice faltered, and he was obliged to desist from speaking. This affection, arising from a partial paralysis of the organs of speech, rendered it at times difficult for him to converse with his friends, and withdrew him in a measure from their society. For months he did not attempt to preach. But, during the months of July, August and September of 1861, he preached once almost every Sabbath. His last sermon was delivered on the 27th of September, from Gen. XIX, 7. His vision, voice and strength were now so seriously impaired that he was obliged to desist from further labours. He, however, always attended public worship on Sabbath morning, when the weather would permit, and, notwithstanding his bodily

infirmities, he would, from principle, never allow himself to sit in prayer; regarding that posture inconsistent with the reverence due to Jehovah, in approaching the throne of grace. He preached several sermons, during his ministry, on the subject of posture in prayer, in which he maintained that there was no instance on record in the word of God, of sitting during that exercise, but that, wherever posture is mentioned, it is either standing, kneeling, or prostration.

It was a custom in the Spring Garden Church, on the Friday afternoon before the Communion, to hold what was termed a church meeting, or a gathering of church members and their children, for exhortation and prayer. The last time he was in the house of God was on an occasion of this kind, in December, 1861. It was with great difficulty, on account of his extreme feebleness, that he was able to walk to the lecture room; but, leaning upon the arm of his wife, he succeeded in getting there, and delivered an address of a most pathetic and impressive character, worthy to be, as it proved to be, his last. He had made his arrangements to be present at the Communion on the following Sabbath; but the exertion of going to the lecture room on Friday so overcame him that he was obliged to remain at home on Sabbath morning, and

consequently joined no more in the commemoration of his Redeemer's love, until he was permitted to mingle in the nobler celebration of the ransomed around the throne.

The following graphic description of the closing period of Dr. McDowell's life is from the pen of his daughter, Mrs. Rice, who, in writing it, only made the record of her own observation:

"My father descended to the tomb very gradually. Until a few weeks before his death, he attended to his accustomed duties, providing the marketing and groceries for family use. He relinquished, one by one, these life employments, without any murmur or complaint, simply remarking, in his peculiarly humble manner, that he was "good for nothing." My brother and myself, with our families, were acustomed to spend every Wednesday at his house, and a truly delightful season it was to both the children and the grandchildren. He made every thing pleasant on these occasions and diffused sunshine all around. His grandchildren he dearly loved, and particularly the youngest of the flock, and was always disappointed when unpleasant weather prevented the little ones from paying their weekly visit. On the occasion of these weekly family gatherings, he persisted in carving at the din-

ner table, even after he was unequal to the effort; but the ruling passion, a desire to minister to the gratification of others, and to be useful, continued to the last. A few weeks previous to his death, however, he yielded to the solicitations of his friends, and permitted others to take his place in the performance of this duty. As he began to decline, gradually but surely, the children and grandchildren would, when they met at the cherished fireside, recount the pleasures of these interviews, and, with painful forebodings, speak of the void that would be made in their circle and their hearts by the removal of the dear one to whom they had looked for counsel for so many years.

"The dreaded period at length arrived. The happy circle assembled for the last time. On the fifty-ninth anniversary of his marriage, we all met, according to our weekly custom, at the house of our beloved and venerated father and grandfather. He appeared in his usual health, and indeed conversed more freely than he had done for some time; for, of late, the difficulty of utterance had increased, so that it required an effort for him to hold a continuous conversation. On parting with him, we received the last farewell uttered in health and consciousness. He retired to his room about eight o'clock in the evening. After a while, my

mother, thinking he might need her services, went up to their chamber, and found him suffering intensely from what seemed to be an attack of bilious colic. She used the ordinary remedies without effect, and the agony increased to such a degree that my father said that if he was not relieved soon he could not live. A physician was immediately sent for, and he came and used measures which he supposed would be efficacious. They relieved temporarily, and the physician left with a request that, if he should be needed again, he might be promptly sent for at any hour of the night. About midnight the pain returned with increased violence, and the physician was again summoned. Upon my mother's inquiring of him if he apprehended danger, as, if this was the case, she wished to send for her children, he advised her to send for them. By two o'clock they were all around his bed, and faithfully and untiringly was he ministered unto by wife and children, until he was gathered, like a shock of corn fully ripe, to the Heavenly garner. He lingered until the 13th of February, ten days after the commencement of his illness. He was only partially conscious, and what was a source of great regret to his family, could not converse with them, his power of speech being almost entirely gone. He would occasionally call some member of

the family, and very often my mother,—a name familiar and endeared for nearly sixty years,—but nothing more. On one occasion his colleague, when visiting him, said to him—"Doctor, the Saviour whom you have so long recommended to others is with you now." He assented by bowing his head two or three times. As day after day, and night after night passed, the anxious group about the bedside saw that their loved and venerated one was nearing the grave. Death was slowly, but steadily, advancing, and heart and flesh were failing; but, although they realized this, they felt that God would be the strength of his heart and his portion forever. He could not tell them, in dying words, that his hope in God was strong, and his confidence in the Rock of Ages unshaken—this would indeed have been gratifying—but what was lacking in his death-bed, was abundantly supplied by his life. His attentive physicians did all in their power to relieve his sufferings and minister to his comfort; but they could not restore decayed nature, or avert the impending stroke of death. They watched him by night and by day, and one of them requested that he might be permitted to remain with him to the last, and close his eyes in death. The anxious group sat in solemn stillness around his death-bed, feeling that if death was there dissolving the

earthly tabernacle, Jesus was there also to convey the immortal spirit to its eternal resting place. The breathing became more and more laboured, then longer intervals elapsed after each breath, until sweetly and peacefully he fell asleep in Jesus, at a quarter past eleven o'clock, on the night of the 13th of February, 1863."

The Funeral service took place in the Spring Garden Church, the scene of his last labours, on Wednesday morning, February 18th. The procession formed at ten o'clock, at the then late residence of the deceased, consisting of a very large number of Clergymen, of various denominations; the Faculty and Trustees of the College of New Jersey; the Boards of the Presbyterian Church; the Trustees of the Spring Garden Church; the Pastor and Session of the Church of Elizabeth, N. J.; the Congregation of the Spring Garden Church; Bible and Sabbath School Classes of the same church; and a large circle of friends. As the procession entered the church, the choir sung the hymn commencing,

"Hear what the voice from Heaven proclaims,"

and the coffin was placed in front of the pulpit. The Rev. Albert Barnes commenced the service by reading a number of appropriate passages of Scripture, con-

cluding with the passage from which Dr. McDowell preached thirty-eight years before, at Mr. Barnes' Ordination,—namely: "Obey them that have the rule over you," &c. The 624th Hymn, "How blest the righteous when he dies!" was then read by the Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Jones, and sung by the choir. Prayer was then offered by the Rev. Dr. Shields, after which the surviving Pastor of the church delivered an Address, containing an affectionate, faithful and beautiful delineation of Dr. McDowell's character. Then followed an Address by Professor Green, of the Princeton Seminary, who succeeded Dr. McDowell as Pastor of the Central Church, and also Addresses from the Rev. Drs. Hodge and McLean, of Princeton, and the Rev. Dr. Boardman, of Philadelphia, each of whom bore an honourable testimony to the excellent character and eminently useful life of the deceased. These several Addresses were afterwards published in a pamphlet. Dr. Shields then read the concluding Hymn, "Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb," and the Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. John Chambers. Before leaving the church, the lid of the coffin was removed, and the congregation passed round to take a last look of their venerated Pastor and friend. At the grave the services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Kempshall, Pastor of the

Church at Elizabeth, of which Dr. McDowell had the charge for so many years. The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. Thomas G. Allen, of the Episcopal Church, who, fifty years before, had been a pupil of Dr. McDowell.

He was the father of three children, two of whom, with their mother, still survive.

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### Resolutions passed on occasion of Dr. McDowell's Death.

The Spring Garden Church unanimously adopted the following:

*Resolved*, 1. That, in the decease of our venerable Senior Pastor, Rev. John McDowell, D. D., we recognize the sovereign right of the Great Head of the Church to dispose of his servants according to his own will.

*Resolved*, 2. That, in the long and active life of our beloved Pastor, we have great reason to rejoice and to thank God for all that He accomplished through him in the promotion of his glory.

*Resolved*, 3. That, in uniform regularity, in precise punctuality, and in an unwearied perseverance, even up to the last hour of physical ability, our departed Pastor set a noble example, and was thereby enabled to perform a vast amount of effective labour.

*Resolved*, 4. That, in being permitted to exercise the functions of the Gospel ministry for fifty-seven years, with less than a single month's interruption in all that period, our beloved Pastor was greatly honoured by his Divine Master,

and discharged an amount of ministerial labour, such as seldom falls to the share of any one man.

*Resolved*, 5. That the Session of Spring Garden Presbyterian Church cherish the memory of its first, and for fourteen years its only, Pastor, with a lively sense of his large instrumentality in its foundation and prosperity.

*Resolved*, 6. That, as a Session, we tender to the family of our late Pastor our warmest sympathies in this hour of their bereavement.

*Resolved*, 7. That, in token of our regard for our deceased Pastor, and of our bereavement in his removal, the Church be clothed in mourning.

MORRIS C. SUTPHEN, Moderator.
H. D. GREGORY, Clerk of Session.

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The Central Presbytery of Philadelphia, at their meeting immediately succeeding Dr. McDowell's death, adopted the following minute:

The Great Head of the Church having recently removed by death our honoured and beloved co-presbyter, the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., we record our sense of loss in his removal, and our confidence that what is loss to us is gain to him. A volume only could adequately set forth his many virtues as a Man, Friend, Christian, and Minister of Christ, or the variety and amount of labour prosecuted by him so successfully during a ministry protracted far beyond the ordinary limit. His example, especially as a Presbyter, we can never forget. His conscientious, constant and punctual attendance upon the various judicatories of the Church, his readiness to assume burdens, and his fidelity in performance of the various duties imposed upon him; his patience of details; the wisdom of his counsels; his uniform urbanity, whether as Presiding Officer or any other position he occu-

pied, will always be remembered by us, and with devout gratitude to God that it was our privilege to be among his contemporaries. In fine, Dr. McDowell will ever be in our minds as a model Presbyter.

We bow submissively to the dispensation of Providence which has removed him from us, hoping and praying that our "last end may be like his."

J. EDWARDS, Stated Clerk.

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At a meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, held on the 7th of April, 1863, the following paper, presented by the Rev. Dr. Boardman, was unanimously adopted:

"1. The Rev. Jno. McDowell, D. D., Pastor of the Spring Garden Church, in this city, having been removed by death, since our last stated meeting, this Presbytery, of which he was, for many years, an honoured and useful member, reverently acknowledge the hand of God in this dispensation.

"2. The Presbytery recall, with great interest, the many virtues with which the character of this venerable servant of God was adorned; his eminent piety, his extraordinary labours in the service of his Master, his consistent life, the faithful devotion of his entire being to the work confided to him, and the signal blessing with which God was pleased to attend his ministry.

"3. We desire to express our gratitude to God for prolonging the life and labours of our revered father, for upwards of four score years, and for the holy peace and joy which marked his transition from the toils and conflicts of earth, to the joy of his Lord.

"4. We tender our cordial sympathy to the bereaved widow and children of our deceased father, and commend

them to the care of a Covenant God, and the ministration of the Divine Comforter."

W. M. RICE,
*Stated Clerk.*

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The Presbyterian Board of Education at its meeting on the 3d of April, 1863, adopted the following:

*Resolved*, That the Board of Education, having been deprived by death of their late Vice-President, the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., do here record their deep sense of this bereavement, and their devout gratitude for the many valuable services of that godly and faithful minister of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the origin of this institution through all its varied trials and successes, until its present widely extended growth and usefulness, he has continued its warm friend and firm supporter; and has uniformly brought to it, both as an officer and a member, that zeal, fidelity and prudence which marked him in every place of trust and duty.

Our Minutes bear record to his punctuality and faithfulness; and, in addition to his counsels and labours, we have had, in all his personal intercourse, the example of a good man, who daily walked with God, and lived in perfect charity with his brethren.

In common with our whole Church, so widely extended and trained during his ministry of more than half a century; with the many public institutions in which he was an active worker; with the different congregations which he served as a faithful Pastor; and with the thousands of Christian people who speak his name with reverence and love; we make our special tribute to his memory.

And, in tendering a copy of this record to his bereaved widow and family, we invoke for them those rich consolations which have crowned such a useful life with such a blessed death.

The Executive Committee of the Board of Domestic Missions in session February 23, 1863, at Philadelphia, passed the following minute:

The Committee record the decease, on the 13th instant, of the Rev. Dr. John McDowell, their Chairman since June, 1833,— a few months lacking thirty years. During that long period he was indefatigable in his attendance on the weekly meetings of the Committee, until the infirmities of great age warned him to desist. Wise in counsel, kind and genial in his intercourse with his fellow members, earnest in the great work of Domestic Missions, few men could have held the Chairmanship of the Committee so long with such acceptableness to his associates, who rejoiced, year by year, to elect him, and, contrary to his remonstrance at last, because of his feebleness, to resolve to continue him in the chair until his Master should call him. We thank God, who spared him to his Church and cause so long — we bless God that he was permitted to see the Board he loved so dearly, advance from its humble beginning thirty years ago, to the high position it obtained previous to the civil commotions that now darken our sky. In advanced age, amid the regrets of the people of God, he has come to his grave, and his works do follow him. We place this simple memorial on record, as our testimony to the great worth and excellencies of our venerable Chairman.

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At a meeting of the Board of Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian Church, held at Philadelphia, March 9th, 1863, the following was entered upon their Minutes:—

On motion, *Resolved*, That the Rev. Drs. H. S. Clarke and T. L. Janeway be appointed a Committee to prepare a minute relative to the decease of our late President, Rev. John McDowell, D. D. The Committee reported the following minute, viz:

It having pleased God recently to remove from us, by death, the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., a member from its organization, and for several years past, the President of the Board, we desire to record our sense of loss in his removal, and our unwavering trust that he has departed to be forever with the Lord.

Admonished by his departure to be also ready, it becomes us to keep in mind the lesson Divine Providence thus teaches us. Nor would we forget the lessons taught us by the life of this venerable servant of God any more than that taught by his death. Like Joseph of Arimathea, he was "a good man and a just." His urbanity and kindness, his punctuality and fidelity to trusts confided to him; his interest in whatsoever would promote the public weal; his devotion to the special work to which his Master appointed him; his interest in all that concerned the welfare of the Church of God; his ardent desire and constant and faithful efforts for the salvation of souls, during a ministry protracted far beyond the ordinary limit, afford a striking example for our imitation. We rejoice at the success which attended his labours; and though, with no ordinary sorrow, we remember that we shall see his face no more on earth, we bow to the Divine will, desiring to say, with Christian submission, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

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The Board of Publication of the Presbyterian Church, at a meeting held in Philadelphia, on the 17th of February, 1863, unanimously adopted the following minute:

The Board, having learned with regret that their old friend and co-labourer, the Rev. John McDowell, D. D., had departed this life, here record the event in testimony of their sincere appreciation of his character as a Man and Christian. Dr. McDowell, after a long life of usefulness, died at his residence in Philadelphia, on the 13th of February, 1863, in the eighty-third year of his age. It has fallen to the lot of few men to have lived so blameless, active, useful and holy a life as our departed friend. His earthly career was unusually protracted, and yet, nearly to its close, it was characterized by untiring activity in the service of his Divine Master. He literally abounded in labours of love, and has received the reward of a good man full of the Holy Ghost. As a Pastor, in several large and important charges, he fulfilled his ministry with signal ability and zeal, and, it is believed, was the honoured instrument of turning souls to Christ. His life was pure and exemplary, and through it he preached as well as by his pulpit ministrations. As an active participator in all the religious and benevolent institutions of the Church, he was ever found at the post of duty, and prompt to render his services. His name is indelibly inscribed on these institutions from their early formation to their fruitful maturity. In the Ecclesiastical Courts he was conscientiously punctual, and uniformly manifested his anxiety that all things should be done decently and in order, to the honour of his Lord. In all the relations of life he was an example, and few have better illustrated their relations as a Husband, a Father, a Friend, and Christian Minister. Through the good providence of God he was long spared to the Church; and when the great objects of life were accomplished, he piously and happily terminated his career, that he might be forever with the Lord. Surely blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

*Resolved*, That this Board, while making this record of one they loved and revered, express their sincere sympathy with

his surviving widow, with whom he has happily lived for near three-score years, and all surviving relatives.

*Resolved,* That a copy of the foregoing be sent to the family of the deceased, properly attested, and that the Board attend the Funeral on Wednesday morning next.

W. E. SCHENCK, *Cor. Sec'y.*

## CHAPTER V.

### Summary of the Extraordinary Results of his Ministry, and how they have been Attained.

It is not easy to form a definite idea of the influence consequent upon the life of any individual, especially of one who occupied so wide a sphere, and was active at so many points in sustaining and advancing the interests of the Church, and moulding the destinies of society, as Dr. McDowell. I will endeavour to present the results of his labours under two or three different aspects. But it is not to be forgotten that, as all influence is progressive, so these results, as already developed, only mark a fresh starting point for still nobler and grander results, which, though lost from all human observation, will be revealed in the day of final recompense.

As the grand design of the Christian ministry is to bring the Gospel in contact with the hearts of men as a regenerating and saving power, so there is no better test of a minister's fidelity and usefulness than the number who are received to the Church under his min-

istry, provided due caution be exercised in respect to their admission. It is indeed quite possible to gather into the Church scores and even hundreds of persons as the fruit of what passes for a revival of religion, when a large number, perhaps a majority of them, are utter strangers to true Christian experience; and the consequence is that they either become open apostates, or live and die self-deceivers and formalists. From every thing of this kind Dr. McDowell was far removed in both principle and practice—the hopeful subjects of a revival he never received to the Communion until a sufficient time had passed for testing the genuineness of their experience; and hence it was a rare thing that he admitted any one who subsequently proved recreant to Christian obligations. The revivals which took place under his ministry were generally characterized not only by great power, but by a deep thoughtfulness, and an orderly and solemn stillness, that impressed upon them the unmistakable insignia of the Spirit of God. It is reasonable, therefore, to consider the great number of revivals which occurred under his ministry, and the immense number of persons whom they were instrumental of bringing into the Church, as a Divine attestation to the real success of his labours.

During his pastorate at Elizabethtown, comprising a

period of twenty-eight years and a half, he was privileged to witness, in connection with his labours, no less than seven revivals; the first of which brought into the church 120; the second 110; the third 180. At the time of his settlement, the whole number of communicants in the church was 207. In 1820, they numbered 660. In that year, on account of the largeness of the church, a colony from it was formed into a Second Church, of which the Rev. (now Dr.) David Magie became Pastor. During the whole period of his connection with this church there were added to the communion on examination, 921; and, on certificate from other churches, 223; making a total of 1,144. His ministry at Philadelphia fell into a period in which revivals of religion were much less frequent in the country at large than they had been during the quarter of a century immediately preceding. He was not permitted here to witness, in a high degree, a repetition of those scenes which had so signalized his ministry at Elizabethtown; and yet a constant Divine blessing seemed to attend his labours, and, at several different periods, the general state of religious feeling was greatly quickened among his people, and considerable additions made to the church. During the twelve years and a half that he ministered to the Central

Church, the whole number added on examination was 218; on certificate, 312; making a total of 530. During his ministry of about sixteen years in the Spring Garden Church, he received, on examination, exclusive of the 87 members of whom the church was originally constituted, 194; and on certificate, 397; making a total of 591. The whole number of members added to the communion of the three churches during his ministry among them, was, on examination, 1333; on certificate, 932; total, 2265.

Among those who were brought into the Church under Dr. McDowell's ministry were not a few young men, who afterwards received a liberal education, some of whom became distinguished in civil life, while others became useful and honoured ministers of the Gospel. Of these, some still survive; and one at least, who has inherited much of the spirit of his venerable Pastor, and has spent his whole ministerial life in charge of a portion of the flock in whose bosom he was born, is yet, not only in word but in deed, a vigorous and earnest witness to the admirable pastoral training which he enjoyed in his early years.

But it was not merely in enlarging the membership of the several churches of which he had the pastoral charge, but in ministering to their strength and pros-

perity in other ways, that Dr. McDowell impressed upon them an enduring mark of his ability and fidelity. The Church at Elizabethtown, when he became its Pastor, was in a divided and agitated state, owing to difficulties which had arisen in connection with the ministry of his predecessor; and, considering his utter lack of professional experience, it seemed hazardous for him to undertake such a charge; but he very soon showed himself adequate to its responsibilities. The lines of division gradually became more faint, until, after a short time, they disappeared altogether; and the congregation, during his whole ministry, was not only one of the largest, but one of the most harmonious, in the Presbyterian Church. As first Pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, he had a primary agency in moulding its character, and elevating it to the high position which it has ever since held among the sister churches of the city. During his pastorate there, he also took the lead in planting a missionary in Cohocksink, then a very destitute neighbourhood, in the Northern suburbs of Philadelphia, — an enterprise which resulted in the establishment of a new Presbyterian church. But perhaps the greatest achievement of his life was in connection with the Spring Garden Church, which has justly been styled

"the child of his old age." Not only was he a principal projector of this enterprise, but a large part of the labour connected with it devolved upon him; especially the raising of the requisite pecuniary means, which he did chiefly by personal application to individuals of his acquaintance. And when, a little less than four years after, the beautiful building, which had been so happily finished and so pleasantly occupied, became an unsightly mass of ruins, he lost no time in moving to repair the desolation, but went forth, with full confidence of success, to resume the labour of collecting funds — and, within an almost incredibly brief period, the house was rebuilt, and was every way a finer edifice than that which had preceded it — and it was not long before he was privileged to know that the last debt against the church was cancelled. Into the several churches of which he has had the pastoral charge, he has instrumentally breathed a spirit of earnest Christian activity and intense devotion to the interests of Christ's Kingdom, that has given them a goodly prominence in our denomination. So, too, he has made them thoroughly acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, as they are set forth in the standards of the Presbyterian Church; while yet they have been taught to practise an enlarged liberality, by witnessing his

pleasant relations, and cordial co-operation for good objects, with ministers of other communions. The children and youth have been specially cared for under his ministry — the Sunday School and the Bible Class each constituted an important part of the machinery by which he carried forward his work; and each was, either directly or indirectly, under his guidance and control. While he aimed at the promotion of morality chiefly by bringing men to embrace Christianity as a living and sanctifying power, he was accustomed to make direct and powerful appeals in favour of the laws of both God and man, and, in some instances, was instrumental in arresting fearful evils which were coming in upon the community like a flood.

But no small part of the influence which Dr. McDowell exerted was through wider and more public channels; and, though it became less palpable as it grew more diffusive, it was nevertheless a real and mighty element in the progress of the Church. He was a member of the General Assembly that founded the Princeton Theological Seminary, and was identified with it as a Director, and Secretary of the Board of Directors, from its beginning in 1812, and as a member of the Board of Trustees, from 1825 — all which offices he held till his death, with the excep-

tion of the Secretaryship, which he resigned in 1860. At several different periods, he served as an Agent to collect funds for this institution, and in his memorable tour through the Southern States, in 1818, he received for this object from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. The interests of the Seminary were always upon his heart, and he never lost an opportunity of promoting them by any means within his reach. He manifested his friendship especially towards the students, as he became acquainted with them, welcoming them to his house, giving them the benefit of his long experience in practical hints and suggestions, and sometimes in procuring the pecuniary means for prosecuting their education. Indeed, any young man who hailed from the Seminary he seemed to look upon with an almost paternal regard ; and how much he accomplished by this kind of intercourse it must be left to the great day of revelation to disclose.

Not only was Dr. McDowell very often a member of the General Assembly, and a delegate from that body to other ecclesiastical bodies of different denominations, but he also held, at different periods, the offices of Permanent Clerk, Stated Clerk, and Trustee of the General Assembly, in each of which he rendered valuable service, and exerted an important influence.

He was a member of the Convention that formed the American Bible Society, in 1816, and always continued the warm friend and active supporter of that noble institution. With the cause of Missions, both Foreign and Domestic, with Education, Tract and other Societies, he identified himself in various ways, and never seemed at rest if he was not doing something, through some channel, to extend the knowledge and influence of the Gospel.

Dr. McDowell accomplished much also for the cause of Education. From the year 1814 he was a Trustee of the College of New Jersey, and was always on the alert to serve its interests, both at home and abroad. In one instance at least, he took an agency in behalf of this institution, making collections in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and as far South as Washington City. To the various schools in his own town he was always ready to lend a helping hand. The formerly well known and still well remembered school of Miss Gorham was much indebted to his influence for the rank which it took among the best female schools of that day. And he was especially devoted to the religious interests of the pupils — he visited them, and counselled them, with the solicitude and tenderness of a father; and it is confidently believed that not a few

of them will be among the gems in his immortal crown.

Dr. McDowell contributed somewhat liberally to the religious literature of his day. His writings are characterized by great simplicity, perspicuity and directness, and show the workings of a mind and heart earnestly bent on doing good. The most important work from his pen is his System of Theology, in two volumes, octavo, published in 1825. In 1839, he published the Bible Class Manual, in two volumes, duodecimo. In 1816, appeared his System of Bible Questions, on the Historical parts of Scripture — the first book of the kind published in this country. About two hundred and fifty thousand copies had been published and circulated, when it was superseded by the Union Questions of the American Sunday School Union.

In addition to the above, he published the following Sermons, chiefly in pamphlet form:

A Sermon on Horse Racing,..... 1809
A New Year's Sermon,..... 1811
The Good Man: A Sermon,.....
Two Sermons in the New Jersey Preacher,..... 1813
Human Depravity and its Remedy: A Sermon in the National Preacher,..... 1837
Joshua's Resolution: Two Sermons in the National Preacher,..... 1830

A Sermon before the American Board of Foreign Missions, ..... 1837
A Sermon on the Death of the Rev. William Latta, D. D., ..... 1847
A Sermon on the Death of Alexander Henry,..... 1847
A Sermon on the Death of the Rev. James W. Stewart, 1849
Fifty Years a Pastor: A Semi-centennary Discourse, .. 1855

Such is a mere outline of the results of the labours of this venerable man. If we could trace the diversified influence of his life, in all his different spheres of action, and through the many invisible channels by which it has been communicated; if we could see how much better the world is at this hour for his having lived in it; how many agencies for good are in operation which, but for him, would not have been created; how many are already before the throne in white robes, and how many more are waiting to ascend, who, if they had not come under his influence, might have kept on in the broad road to death,—if our vision could be quickened and enlarged to such an estimate as this,—his life would assume an importance of which we can at present have no adequate conception. But even, with our imperfect and limited views, we can see that his career was one of extraordinary usefulness; that he was honoured of God, as few of his servants are, in ministering to the well-being of

the race, and sustaining and carrying forward the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

It becomes a matter of deep interest to inquire how the fact is to be accounted for that such a vast amount of good should be accomplished by a single life—for it may safely be said that there are few men in an age whose influence operates at once so benignly, so powerfully, so extensively, as does that of the man whose history we are contemplating. If I mistake not, the reason of this is to be found partly in the peculiar qualities of mind and heart with which our friend was originally endowed; partly in the providence of God, moulding his character, and ordering his lot; and to crown all, in the large measure of Divine spiritual influence by which his labours were attended.

Dr. McDowell's mind was neither peculiarly metaphysical nor peculiarly imaginative; but it was clear in its perceptions, accurate and safe in its judgments, and eminently practical in all its tendencies. Though he had well considered and thoroughly established principles in respect to every thing, he accepted those principles, either as obvious conclusions from reason, or as the unerring decisions of inspiration, without being careful to subject them to a rigid philosophical

analysis. He was most at home amidst palpable realities, and knew better than most men how to meet the wants of the common mind. In this lay, to a great extent, the secret of his wonderful executive power—few men, either in the ministry or out of it, could address themselves with so much facility and success to any enterprise that might demand attention.

In noticing Dr. McDowell's moral qualities, it must be borne in mind that they belong to a sanctified nature—while they indicate the distinctive character of his original constitution, they have the advantage of having passed under the purifying and elevating influence of a living Christianity.

Among the more prominent of his moral characteristics was a rigid conscientiousness, an unswerving integrity, that no considerations of present advantage, or worldly prudence or expediency, could carry a hair's breadth away from the straight line of duty. Having formed his judgment of what was right by the best light he could command, he adhered to his convictions with great fidelity and steadfastness, unless his opinion were reversed by his being brought into some brighter light. He would never render himself needlessly offensive by assailing the opinions of others or urging his own on unsuitable occasions; but if he believed that

his duty called him to stand forth in defence of the true or the right, no bribe could be tempting enough, no danger could be sufficiently appalling, to lead him even to raise the question whether he should be diverted from his purpose. His course in respect to the memorable Horse Race, and on one or two other occasions, during his ministry at Elizabethtown, showed that, when great questions of right were to be settled, he had nerves of iron with which to encounter the fiercest opposition that could be arrayed against him. At a later period in his ministry, questions of grave bearing on the prosperity of the Church arose, on which he differed from his brethren with whom he had been in life-long intimacy; but, however great the sacrifice that was involved, he could not, either in public or in private, abate one jot or tittle from his honest convictions.

He was remarkable also for a habit of methodical industry. He looked upon time as one of the talents which he had received from the Great Master, to be employed in his service; and he was never satisfied that any of his moments should go to waste. Hence, whether he was at home or abroad; whether some great public interest was pressing upon his attention or he was engaged merely with his ordinary home duties, he

was always a busy man—not indeed so busy as to be neglectful of Christian hospitalities and courtesies becoming the situation in which Providence had placed him, but making it manifest to all that, like his Divine Master, he must always be about his Father's business. But then his labours were so methodically arranged, he had the business for each day and each hour so clearly laid out—so far at least as the ordinary routine of duty was concerned—that he never seemed in a hurry, and never lost any time in determining what he should do next. Those who were in the most intimate relations with him have often been struck with the fact that he would always, when it was possible, give the conversation a turn which might, in some way, subserve the interest of some good cause or object which he was intent on promoting.

It was a legitimate result of his well ordered industry that he was most exact in meeting all his appointments and engagements. Punctuality he regarded as one of the cardinal virtues, the elements of which were truth, justice and honour. Whoever else might be absent from a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary, or the Board of Trustees of the College, or the Board of Missions, or any other Board with which he was connected, he was

always punctually there, unless detained by some providential event over which he had no control; and his associates, however they might regret his absence, needed no assurance that there was some just cause for it. The same quality was manifested in respect to all his engagements at home—indeed it pervaded his whole pastoral intercourse—his people were trained to expect that he would be true not only to the hour but to the moment; and the consequence was that they became imbued, in no small degree, with the same spirit; and happily that spirit has been kept in vigorous exercise by subsequent ministrations.

With his untiring industry was intimately connected a perseverance that knew not how to yield to any obstacle that was not absolutely insuperable. He was often placed in circumstances which, to a mind less earnest and heroic than his own, would have indicated that another step in advance could not be taken; and yet they would only serve to quicken his energies into higher activity, and perhaps convey to him a fresh assurance of the ultimate accomplishment of his object. If he became satisfied, as he sometimes did, that duty required him to pause in any particular course, or even withdraw from it, he had no pride of consistency to embarrass him in acting in accordance with his con-

victions. But in all other cases, he recognized no legitimate stopping place except at the point where he could reflect that his work was done.

Dr. McDowell possessed a large share of natural benevolence. Though his pecuniary means were never ample, he always gave cheerfully, up to the full measure of his ability. After the destruction of the Spring Garden Church, he immediately started the project of rebuilding, by heading the subscription with the sum of five hundred dollars. Though he was discriminating in the bestowment of his charities, his heart and his hand were always open to the relief of human suffering. And the same spirit which moved him to give liberally, prompted him also to stir up others to "go and do likewise." He knew how to approach individuals, of all characters, in behalf of the great objects of Christian benevolence, as well as any other man; and hence the aggregate of his collections in aid of different institutions and churches, during his ministry, is probably greater than that of any other individual has ever been within the limits of the Presbyterian Church.

His manners were characterized by great simplicity and naturalness, and the absence of every thing that bordered upon ostentation. While there was nothing that betokened an early training in elegant and fash-

ionable society, there was always a kindly and dignified manner, and a strict regard to all the proprieties of social life. While he was ever ready to bear his part in conversation, in a free and affable manner, he was as far as possible from assuming more than belonged to him. And all his intercourse was marked by singular prudence — few men knew better than he how to say the right thing at the right time — and no doubt this was one great secret of his so rarely giving offence, even in his plainest utterances. Though the general habit of his mind was grave, it was not gloomy — he enjoyed cheerful intercourse in a high degree, and would sometimes relate or listen to a humorous anecdote with a marked relish. In his most unrestrained moments, he never forgot that he was a minister of the Gospel, and was set to watch for souls as one that must give an account.

But the crowning attribute of Dr. McDowell's character was his fervent and active piety. Religion with him was eminently an all pervading and all controlling principle, giving a decided complexion to his convictions, his feelings, his actions. It was evident to all that his religious life was sustained by intimate communion with God — it was in the uncommonly spiritual atmosphere in which he lived that his active graces

gathered such strength and maturity as to render him a model labourer in the Lord's vineyard. While he had no sympathy with any thing like fanaticism or extravagance, but was calm and intelligent in all his religious demonstrations, there was a simplicity, a tenderness, an irrepressible earnestness, in whatever he said and did, that made it manifest to every one that he was much more than an ordinary Christian. His letters, of which a very large number have been preserved, are redolent of love to God, and love to man; and of those that have come under my eye, there are comparatively few — no matter what may have been the circumstances in which they were written — in which there is not something to indicate the upward tendencies of his spirit.

With such qualities of mind and heart, it is easy to imagine the type which his character as a Preacher must have assumed. His sermons were logically constructed, and brought out the great truths of the Gospel in the most simple and luminous manner, without pretension or studied ornament. And, though his manner of delivery was not remarkable for what are commonly called the graces of elocution, there was in it a fervour, a force, that made it well nigh irresistible. Though the great evangelical doctrines formed the sta-

ple of his preaching, he was accustomed to expound the lessons of God's providence, as they came out in passing events; and the texts which he selected for such occasions were almost always singularly appropriate. I heard him preach a sermon in his own church (the Central) in Philadelphia, in 1837, with reference to the pecuniary troubles of that period; and, though it contained not a sentence which was not level almost to the capacity of childhood, it was full of important and well-adapted truth, and delivered with such manifest sincerity and intense earnestness, that the whole audience seemed most deeply impressed. It is due to Dr. McDowell to say that his printed sermons, excellent as they are, convey but a very inadequate idea of the real power of his preaching; for that indescribable unction of manner, already alluded to, hardly left it at any one's option whether or not to be impressed by his weighty utterances.

As a Pastor, he stood in the very foremost rank of excellent ministers. In this branch of duty as in every other, he was most exact and uniform. He visited all the families in his large congregation, extending several miles into the neighbouring country, at regular intervals; and these visits were strictly of a religious character, designed to give greater effect

to his public ministrations. He was careful that no one belonging to his pastoral charge should be overlooked,—especially that those in the humbler walks of life should have their due share of attention. He was watchful for the first indications of religious thoughtfulness in any of his people, and lost no time in getting access to them, and in endeavouring to give the right direction to their thoughts, to impress them with a sense of their danger, and enlighten them in respect to their duty, and bring them to a compliance with the terms of the Gospel. He was most faithful and tender in the discharge of his duties to the sick and the sorrowful, never losing an opportunity to dispense consolation, where the circumstances would admit of it, or to enforce the solemn and monitory lessons of Divine Providence. If he knew that any of his people were in difficulty of any kind, he was sure to find his way to them as a counsellor, provided the case came within the scope of his ability, or as a comforter, if his sympathy would contribute any thing to their relief. Indeed, his relation to his congregation seemed to be very much like that of a father to his family; and, as he was pre-eminently a centre of attraction and of blessing in his own house, so he moved about with a sort of paternal dignity and kindliness

among his whole flock, always dispensing to them the tokens of his good will, and receiving from them, in turn, the expressions of an almost filial regard.

In nothing was Dr. McDowell more highly distinguished than his familiarity with ecclesiastical procedure. He was as thoroughly acquainted with every rule pertaining to Church order and discipline, as if that particular subject had been the main study of his life. In all ecclesiastical bodies his judgment was looked upon as well nigh oracular. In addition to his great knowledge, he had a remarkable tact and facility at applying rules and principles, which made him always recognized as a leading spirit in every Church Court.

But any estimate of the reasons of Dr. McDowell's extraordinary usefulness would be very imperfect that should omit a distinct recognition of the providence and grace of God. The Divine providence began to manifest itself graciously towards him in the circumstances of his birth and early education. God gave him parents who were eminently pious; especially a mother who, by her excellent counsels and example and earnest prayers, produced a spiritual atmosphere around him, most favourable to the early culture of the heart. Then, while he was passing through Prince-

ton College, though he was in the midst of a hot bed of infidelity and profligacy, and had not even the safeguard of a Christian profession to protect him, he was mercifully preserved from falling into any of the innumerable snares by which he was surrounded, and was carried safely and triumphantly through that fearful ordeal. The providence of God was remarkably displayed in fixing him at Elizabethtown when his attention had already been directed to another field, which he was on the way to explore, with reference to occupying it. And not only at Elizabethtown, but in both his charges in Philadelphia, had he among his people many good men and true, who were both able and faithful coadjutors with him in carrying out the great purposes of his ministry;—men in whom he found a tower of strength, not only in his ordinary work, but in the various extraordinary enterprises to which he had occasion to address himself. He was, also, throughout his whole ministry, in constant intercourse with some of the best clerical society which the country afforded; was always within immediate range of some of the giants of his day; and there can be no doubt that in this intercourse he found an invigorating influence to both his faculties and affections, while they all became efficient fellow-helpers in prose-

cuting their Lord's work. And to crown all, no ministry perhaps in this land has ever been attended with richer effusions of God's Holy Spirit: while he scarcely ever knew what it was to be without some gracious manifestations in connection with his labours, he was privileged, during a large part of the time, to feel that God, in very deed, was working, through his instrumentality, for the salvation of souls. He was a noble specimen of a minister of the Gospel; but, with humility and thanksgiving, he ascribed to God all the glory.

# CHAPTER VI.

## Commemorative Letters.*

### I.

From the Rev. R. W. Dickinson, D. D.

"Ridge Lawn," Fordham,
*March 28th*, 1863.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

I have recently been informed that you intend to prepare a Memoir of the late Dr. John McDowell — if so, permit me to state that, though my personal acquaintance with him was very limited, yet I can readily understand why it was that he stood so high in the estimation of those who knew him best; and how it was that, through the whole period of his protracted ministry, he exerted a daily influence for good in his several relations to the Church.

I heard him preach but twice. The first time, (and it was in the Old Wall Street Church, not long after the death of the lamented Whelpley,) though I was too young to judge of the merits of his discourse, I was arrested by the beauty and spiritual significancy of his text: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom,

* These letters are arranged in the order of their dates.

neither shall fruit be in the vines, &c., yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

The last time I heard him, (and it was in the same church some years after the congregation had removed to their present site on the Fifth Avenue,) I listened with the more attention as, by his preliminary services, I found myself predisposed to anticipate spiritual benefit from his lips. I have not forgotten even the Psalm which he read; it was the 116th, read in a manner that not merely interested but affected me. It may be because it was peculiarly expressive of my own emotions on again entering the House of God, after having been prevented, for a brief time, by sickness. Allowance may always be made for our own frame of mind in judging of any one's services in the pulpit. But, on the occasion to which I refer, it must have been evident to all that the Doctor had appropriated to himself the sentiments of the Psalm which he was reading with so much devout expression, and when he uttered the 16th verse, there was a touching tenderness in his tones that conveyed to my mind the resistless conviction that he felt, and deeply too, his inexpressible obligations to Sovereign Grace. "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds."

Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, Dr. McDowell is prominently associated in my mind with a very simple circumstance. It was at the close of the first or second session of my Seminary course at Princeton that he was announced to deliver the Annual Address to the students. Having never heard an Address on such an occasion, I, with other members of my class, of course anticipated something above the ordinary range of mind — something that possibly might surpass the occasional efforts of our venerated Professors : perhaps his subject would be "Pulpit Eloquence," illustrated by reference to some of the greatest preachers, or "The Relation of the Pulpit to Literature" ; perhaps the "Philosophy of Christianity," or the "Relation of Cause and effect,"— a point very much discussed about that time; perhaps the "Importance of Creeds," in anticipated refutation of the late Dr. John Duncan's questionable utterances, which, at the time, had been repeated with approbation by certain students.

At last the hour arrived; the Theological Chamber was thronged ; the expectation of the younger students was at its height! Judge, then, of my feelings when the Doctor's subject proved to be the "Importance of Habits of Punctuality to a Minister of the Gospel." *Punctuality!* So great was my disappointment that I

listened with impatience, and even detected in my consciousness a something not remotely allied to *amazement*, that a distinguished Doctor of Divinity should, on such an occasion, deal only in what then seemed to me the veriest commonplaces.

But how often have I since been constrained to make amends for my virtual disparagement of a subject, which, however trite, has, in its relations to the Ministry, many a lesson of practical wisdom; a subject which no one, perhaps, would have selected under the circumstances, who had not lost sight of self in his single desire to incite his youthful auditors to the formation of habits so essential to their appropriate and increasing influence as Ministers of the Word.

What effect the Doctor's Address may after all have had in leading me to appreciate the virtue of punctuality, I may not decide; but it is not unlikely that, if a number whom I might mention had heard the Address, I might, under various circumstances, have been spared the loss of much precious time, and sometimes the torture of suspense at the church door, lest I should be obliged to enter the pulpit without a sermon either in my pocket or my head.

But enough: I love to contemplate the character of a man, who, through a long life has borne himself well

—made full proof of his ministry, as well as "kept the faith;" and I trust that you, my dear Sir, may be spared to finish the work which you have so kindly consented to undertake; and that you will be abundantly rewarded for all your labours of love.

With every sentiment of fraternal esteem,

I remain yours,

R. W. DICKINSON.

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II.

From the Rev. William S. Plumer, D. D.

Philadelphia, *May* 6, 1863.

My Dear Brother:

I fully concur in the desire of many to see a memoir of the late excellent Dr. John McDowell. Well prepared, it will be full of instruction. I am heartily glad that you are to be his biographer.

I do not think you will have a very easy task. Dr. McDowell had been eminently useful before the great mass of those now filling our pulpits were in Christ. For years before his death, he seldom saw one whom he had known as a Preacher until after he himself had become an experienced Pastor.

To one class of persons the memoir will probably be very useful—viz.: to young ministers of the Gospel. When an ordinary young man contemplates the wonders achieved by the amazing eloquence and genius of Whitefield, Spencer, Hall or Chalmers, he says,—"Such attainments are so high that I can never reach them. It is presumption to think of it." But when he shall see Dr. McDowell, remarkable chiefly for common sense, piety and singleness of purpose, bringing many hundreds of souls into the Church, and greatly edifying God's people, he will say,—"By God's blessing, I, too, may be distinguished for my services in the Master's cause."

I also think your work, as a biographer, will be pleasant. You will trace the wonderful course of Providence towards a pious youth seeking the ministry. You will see how the young Pastor was led, by the good and free Spirit of God, through trials and difficulties to enlarged usefulness. The field of his labours almost invariably became a green spot in the garden of God. When the late learned and pious Dr. Ruffner was a young man, he travelled from Virginia to the North. Stopping at Elizabethtown, N. J., he was invited to preach the weekly lecture to Dr. McDowell's people. There was a good audience, and Mr. Ruffner preached to the unconverted. After service he was delighted to

hear that there were but one or two persons present who were not members of the church, although he was mortified at his own sad mistake.

I have been acquainted with Dr. McDowell since 1826. I have often served with him in bodies convened for ecclesiastical and benevolent objects. I have often spent an hour or two with him, though we never were intimate. Still I have definite ideas of the secrets of his success. I say secrets, because there were several things of importance that made him what he was.

1. I think he set the Lord always before him. God's will was his law. God's honour was his aim. He subordinated every thing to religion.

2. Jesus Christ was precious to him. His preaching and his thinking were evangelical. Tradition says this was so when he was a young man. I know it was so later in life. A brother who loved and honoured Dr. McDowell, suggests that an examination of his manuscripts would show that, to an unusual degree, his sermons would be found clearly to explain the way of salvation.

3. Dr. McDowell never faltered in his belief of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. If he was sure that the Bible taught any thing, he doubted no more. He was fully persuaded that God's Word was a fire

and a hammer. He never rested his own conclusions on human wit, or speculation, when he could lay hold of God's testimony. "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

4. Dr. McDowell was a practical man. His was no dreamy existence. He lost no time in forming or in attempting to execute impracticable schemes.

5. He was industrious. He was always at work. He was a fisher of men; and if he was not making a draught of fishes, he was mending his nets. In the hot weather of 1835, I spent some weeks in this city. Whenever I called on him, I found him industriously engaged in writing sermons, just as if he had but recently begun to preach.

6. Dr. McDowell was benevolent. He carried no grudges. He was kind to all. He wept with those who wept. If any survivor reproaches himself for any ill treatment of Dr. McDowell, it is quite certain Dr. McDowell carried not to his grave the memory of his wrong. I doubt not he would have said, with one of my correspondents now passed away from earth, "I would not give one hour of brotherly love for a whole eternity of contention." He was a man of peace.

7. He always did his best. He never intentionally slighted any part of his calling.

8. I leave quite to others to give you the materials for speaking of the afflictions of his life. But his trials were great. He sometimes spoke of them to me, but always with a cheerful acquiescence in the will of God.

I shall be pleased if this letter shall encourage you in your work.

Very respectfully and affectionately yours,

WILLIAM S. PLUMER.

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III.

FROM MRS. MARY ANN F. CHESTER.*

ELIZABETH, *May* 8, 1863.

DEAR SIR:

In compliance with your request for facts connected with the ministry of the late Dr. J. McDowell, I reply that nothing could be more in accordance with my feelings than to bear testimony in favour of one for whom I have always entertained the warmest love and veneration. My earliest recollections of religious instruction are associated with his ministry. His faithful warnings from the pulpit, his biblical and catechetical instruction, have so embalmed his memory in the hearts of those who were favoured with them, that

* Wife of the Rev. Alfred Chester.

their influence will be felt long after Pastor and people have gone to their Heavenly reward.

Dr. McDowell, in a remarkable degree, secured the confidence and affection of his young people, and it was done by his attractive manner of communicating religious instruction.

His Bible Classes, in which the recitation of the Larger and Shorter Catechism formed a part of the exercises, were fully attended. Between one and two hundred usually composed the class. He took a deep interest in the education of the young, and was in the habit of visiting weekly, and giving Bible instruction in a large and flourishing Female Seminary, (under the care of Miss Gorham.) His plan was to give five chapters to the school, which were read and studied by the pupils during the week, but more particularly intended as a Sunday lesson before Sunday Schools were established. On Monday morning the class recited, answering such questions as the Pastor then proposed. The teacher of the Seminary suggested that Dr. McDowell should write questions upon the lesson, and hand them weekly to the scholars, which they copied for their own use. This plan was pursued for some time, when the teacher proposed that they should be printed, which was done, and this is the origin of "Mc-

Dowell's Bible Questions," so far famed and extensively used throughout the country—the first Bible Questions printed, which were afterwards generally used in Sunday Schools and Bible Classes. He took a deep interest in Sunday Schools, which were established in this place in 1814; visiting them and encouraging the teachers by his presence and counsel.

When Dr. McDowell came to Elizabethtown, the congregation were in a distracted and somewhat divided state. Some of the aged members of the church were praying in secret that a suitable Pastor might be sent them, who would unite the people and repair the desolations of Zion. A pious female, a mother in Israel, whose heart was heavily burdened on account of the state of the church, and its spiritual wants, and who, in concert with others, had been praying that a suitable Pastor might be sent them, dreamed that she saw the one God had determined as their spiritual guide, coming into the town on horseback. This dream she related to one of the praying circle, and, a few days after, when young McDowell passed her window on his way to one of the elders of the church, to announce himself to him as a minister ready to preach on the next Sabbath, if needed, the old lady, seeing him, exclaimed, "There goes our minister! there goes the one

I saw in my dream! he is not on horseback, but that is the form impressed on my mind."

The young clergyman had come into the place on horseback, and, stopping at a hotel, was directed by the keeper to this elder. I mention this not as a believer in dreams and visions, but as an interesting fact in connection with the arrival of the young preacher, and as "The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him," this godly woman may have been favoured with a sight of him who was to be her spiritual counsellor and guide.

The good effects of Dr. McDowell's ministry are still felt here; the seed he sowed is yet yielding its fruits; and generations will have passed away ere his name will be forgotten, or the sweet savour of his influence lost among us. I am respectfully yours,

MARY ANN F. CHESTER.

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IV.

From the Rev. Joseph Holdich, D. D.

New York *May*, 19, 1863.

My Dear Sir:

To write my personal recollections, which you have asked of me, of the late Rev. Dr. John McDowell, is not an unpleasing task. Having lived in intimate relations

with him, and having had the best opportunities, I knew him well, and knew him only to revere and love him.

The basis of Dr. McDowell's character was integrity. From this, as the central point, all his other virtues radiated. He was a man pre-eminently honest of purpose. He carried this principle throughout. He was honest to himself, to his fellow beings, and to his God. This seems to have arisen, partly from a happy and well balanced mental and moral constitution, but it owed its completeness to the grace of God, sanctifying a faithful Christian education, and the diligent inculcation of Divine truth upon his mind, by a faithful and affectionate, as well as wise and prudent, Christian mother.

Dr. McDowell was eminently honest with himself. He knew what he could, and what he could not do. He knew the limitations of his own faculties. Without aiming to be the mere scholar, or the man of taste, or the popular orator, or eloquent declaimer, he addicted himself to that which suited his bent of mind, and became the man of eminently practical usefulness in the church and in society. This appeared remarkably in his ministry at Elizabethtown, where I first became acquainted with him. On his removal to Philadelphia,

when I once mentioned his frequent invitations to address popular meetings, anniversaries, and the like, he said, — "Yes, but it is because I am a new man. After a while, they will find out that that is not my sphere, and then they will let me alone."

The resolution to change his field of labour from Elizabethtown to Philadelphia was probably formed at my house. While the Doctor was on a visit to me, while Pastor of the Union Church in Fourth Street, he preached on the Sabbath for the incipient Central Church, the result of which was an immediate call to the Pastorate of that church. In accepting this call, he was not moved by any secular or unworthy motives. He gained nothing by it in a worldly point of view, either as to salary, reputation or position. He believed that he would be more useful by a change in his field of labour. He remarked, too, that his advancing years disqualified him for the laborious round of duties, which his people in Elizabethtown had been used to, and would still expect, and that it would be easier and better for him to adjust his duties to his strength, in a new place. Certainly, in his former field, the size of his parish, his rural preaching, his pastoral visitations, his visiting the sick and afflicted, his burials of the dead, besides the constant calls upon him for public

labour, in various ways, made up a load of duty, that none but the most vigorous frame could long endure.

In Dr. McDowell piety did not lie on the surface so much as it does in some men. It was inwrought and deep, showing itself in settled principles and in Christian views, conduct and tempers, rather than in much talk or outward manifestation. He was not a man of many words, not given to take the lead in conversation so much as to sustain it by judicious thoughts and appropriate remarks and suggestions. His conversation was always judicious and wise, never brilliant and sparkling, but marked with comprehensive and pregnant sentences. He was eminently a safe counsellor. None resorted to him merely for entertainment, very many for instruction and counsel, especially in delicate and difficult affairs.

I have said that integrity was the basis of Dr. McDowell's character. This was seen in his estimate of others, in his judgment and interpretation of their conduct. He was singularly just, "rendering to all their dues," in property, reputation, and all other claims. He desired every man to enjoy what rightly belonged to him, even though it came in conflict with his own interests. Of this I remember a pertinent illustration. A gentleman whom he regarded as a

friend, learned that a piece of property which the Doctor desired to sell would soon be in demand at an enhanced price, and, concealing his knowledge, he went and bought it at a price much below what it was worth shortly after. When, after the facts became known, some one spoke of the transaction as dishonourable and unjust, the Doctor checked the speaker, saying, "Not so, it was not dishonourable nor unjust—it was a fair business transaction; but I must say it was what a true friend would not have done."

Dr. McDowell's integrity had its foundation in religion. It sprang from a sense of his obligations to God — hence it was radical and consistent, not partial and uneven, not fitful and uncertain, nor subject to circumstances or caprice. His steady aim was to do right towards both God and man. It was this constant sense of moral obligation that led him so constantly to acknowledge and honour his Maker before the people in all public events, in great calamities, in general blessings and in open, daring crimes. In all such events the people expected to hear their Pastor's uplifted voice, calling upon God, and directing his people to the Great Ruler of the world. He always honoured God, and so God honoured his servant in the eyes of the people, 1 Sam., II. 30.

Nothing tries integrity, even religious integrity, more than the spirit of party or sect. Many a man who would despise duplicity or injustice for himself, is guilty of them for the supposed advancement of his sect. They are not aware that they are unjust, but they cannot look at things in their true light, through party spectacles. In spite of themselves objects appear in distorted shapes or false colours. In this Dr. McDowell showed his prominent characteristic.

Every one knew that the Doctor was a decided Presbyterian. He certainly thought Presbyterianism a little, perhaps a good deal, better than any thing else; yet he could not be called bigoted. He saw good in others, and he confessed it too. He was candid as well as just. A little incident I may introduce, serving to show the spirit of justice rising above partyism. A near friend of his was sought in marriage by a gentleman of a different denomination. Some of the friends were opposed to it on this ground. The lady was advised, by a particular friend, a member also of Dr. McDowell's church, to ask his assistance to overcome the objections,—advice which seemed preposterous to one who knew the Doctor only as a decided Presbyterian. "Yes," was the reply, "but he is just and candid. He sees things in their true light, and is not

biased by party and prejudiced views, and he is the very one to obviate your difficulties." This friend saw into her Pastor's real character, and the end justified her estimation of him. He undertook the task and succeeded.

I was myself a witness of an incident illustrating the same trait of character. While stationed at Elizabethtown, during a period of considerable religious interest, a young person, a member of Dr. McDowell's congregation but not of the church, was awakened at the Methodist Church, and was in an interesting state of religious feeling. I told the Doctor that one of his lambs seemed disposed to come into our fold. "Very well," he said, "if the pasture suits her better it is all right, but she ought to consider it well. I will see her." He did see her, and his influence was too strong for me. She staid where she was. Others, however, left his church and joined ours, but without any breach of friendship or interruption of good feeling. These incidents show how clergymen of different denominations, equally decided in their preferences, may act honourably and justly towards each other, and live in harmony, notwithstanding denominational differences.

Dr. McDowell was remarkable for punctuality. It was a rule with him, prompted by consideration and a

sense of justice, never to keep one waiting, and this applied to all occasions, public, social and domestic. I remember well an incident which called out his expression on this subject. While staying at his house I was one day late at dinner. After taking our seats at the table, he remarked very pleasantly,—"You were rather late to day." Without thinking, for the moment, of his particularity, I remarked,—"Yes, I was unexpectedly detained by some friends." But, observing a look of inquiry as if expecting a better reason, I alleged something else equally unsatisfactory. But, observing the same expression, I added what was really the fact,—"besides, I find my watch did not agree with your clock. I thought I was in time." "Yes," he replied, "that will do." He could not accept the others as adequate apologies, but the last met the case. But it was all very courteous and pleasant, not in the least brusque or disagreeable.

It is not my place nor purpose to describe Dr. McDowell's preaching. That will be done more appropriately by a more able hand. I simply remark that its excellences were most highly appreciated by the pious, especially those of most staid and solid character. To such his preaching was a treat. A somewhat singular testimony to this was borne on a certain occa-

sion while on a visit to my house. On the Sabbath he preached for a brother clergyman, who was in the habit of delivering very able and scholarly discourses, but not so highly impregnated with the life and spirit of the gospel as some. In the course of the week, a member of the church, speaking in high terms of the services of the previous Sabbath, added with uncommon *naiveté*, "Ah! we don't have such preaching every day."

Elizabethtown was the residence of the Rev. Thomas Morrell, a venerable and excellent minister of the Methodist Church, of whom the Rev. Dr. Murray furnished a vivid sketch in your Annals of the American Pulpit. I frequently heard Mr. Morrell speak in the warmest terms of his Presbyterian brother, and of the pleasant intercourse they always maintained. He gave an account of a most impressive interview which took place at his own house, between Dr. McDowell, while yet a young man, and Bishop Asbury. Mr. Morrell having given some account of the useful labours and devoted piety of the good Pastor, the Bishop, who was always ready to appreciate zeal and piety wherever found, expressed a desire to see him. Accordingly he was invited to meet the venerable man, when they spent some time in solemn and profitable conversation. As

the youthful Pastor was about to take his leave, the venerable Bishop rose at the same time, and, placing his hands upon his head, pronounced upon him the Apostolic Benediction. It was an impressive moment that Mr. Morrell said they all felt deeply. Dr. McDowell, in relating the incident to me, many years after, said he never felt so solemn in all his life. It was like a new consecration to his sacred office. "The good Bishop's blessing," he said, "seemed to rest upon me a long time afterwards."

Such, my dear Sir, are my principal personal recollections of Dr. John McDowell that I suppose adapted to your purpose. I shall be happy to have contributed any thing, however small, towards exhibiting the character of so excellent a man, and so worthy a servant of our common Master.

Very respectfully your servant in the Gospel,

JOSEPH HOLDICH.

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V.

FROM MRS. M. T. HALL.*

CLEVELAND, *July* 20, 1863.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter, asking for some reminiscences of the late Dr. John McDowell, was received a few days since.

* Wife of William Hall, Esq.

Happy indeed should I be could I contribute anything of interest to the memoir of the beloved Pastor of my youth, whose memory is very precious to me.

I can only render my testimony to the warmth of his zeal, his earnestness and faithfulness as a Preacher, his generous sympathy with all who were in sorrow, and his untiring devotion to the best interests of every member of his flock; and I may add, to the love and veneration with which his whole congregation regarded him. I have no doubt that the secret of his unusual success in the ministry was the unwearied pains he took to indoctrinate his people,—teaching them in "all knowledge and understanding," striving to establish them in the great truths of the Gospel.

An interesting fact, showing the blessed effects of such teaching, now occurs to me. After a powerful revival, in the early part of his ministry, he instituted a Bible, or rather a Catechetical Class, taking the Westminister Catechism for his text-book, and lecturing on every question. Seventy young persons attended, one half of whom made no pretensions to any thing like piety. In a revival that took place five years after, every one of these persons, we had reason to believe, was the subject of a genuine conversion. This shows the great importance of systematic doctrinal in-

struction, and well illustrates the absurdity of the notion that the truths of religion should not be lodged in the minds of the young, before they can fully comprehend them. This class, of which I have spoken was continued, without intermission, during his pastorate at Elizabethtown — when one class of scholars left, others came in to supply their places; and, after going through the Catechism, he took up a course of Ecclesiastical History.

An instance of remarkable Christian courage and fidelity in so young a man was manifested soon after his settlement. The ministers of that church had been accustomed to baptize indiscriminately the children of those who were not professing Christians. But in this Dr. McDowell could not conscientiously follow the example of his predecessors. His refusal to do so caused great dissatisfaction, especially among the most prominent and influential members of the congregation; yet he remained firm to his convictions, and immediately distributed several copies of the Confession of Faith, proving to them that this practice was contrary to the creed and rules of their Church.

I fear, my dear Sir, you will be disappointed that I can furnish nothing that is more to your purpose. I have, indeed, a vivid remembrance of this excellent

man — for even the lapse of fifty years cannot obliterate from our hearts and memories the obligations we owe to those guides and teachers, who have been instrumental of forming our characters, and leading us in the paths of truth and virtue; but my recollections, at this late period, are rather general than particular.

The last letter I received from him was in 1861, which I prize as a precious memorial of a faithful servant of Christ, who has closed his labours on earth, and gone to receive his reward.

Respectfully yours,

M. T. HALL.

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VI.

From the Rev. David Magie, D. D.

Elizabeth, *November* 7, 1863.

My Dear Sir:

You ask me for my impressions of the character of Dr. John McDowell, with some incidents in his life, and I cheerfully comply with the request. I owe this both to him and to you—to him for what he was to me, to you for your labour of love in thus embalming the name of an honoured Minister of the Gospel. Right glad am I that the work of preparing his memoir has fallen into your hands, and my earnest prayer is that it may prove a rich and a widely extended blessing.

Dr. McDowell was my Pastor for fifteen of the most impressible years of my life, and after that we laboured in intermingled parishes for upwards of twelve years more. During the latter period especially, I saw him almost daily, and had the best possible opportunity for observing his spirit and witnessing his manner of life, both as a man and a minister. Still I find a difficulty in meeting your request, not so much because my impressions of his character are indistinct, as from the want of a knowledge of those striking incidents which would help to impart zest and fairness to the sketch you are preparing. The fact is, his life was not made up of what are termed striking incidents. In this respect many men of not half his real personal worth, or a tithe of his usefulness to the Church of God, could supply more material for a memoir.

There was very little about this good man to excite wonder, or lead the multitude to say, lo, here! or lo, there! Year in and year out, it was but the earnest preacher filling his pulpit, the faithful shepherd feeding his flock, the alert watchman taking the oversight of souls, the energetic minister serving his congregation by the will of God. If he gained distinction, it was not by saying and doing queer things, but good things. Though a very cheerful, genial man, drawing

his friends closely around him, and binding them to him by ties not easily broken, his influence depended very little upon witty remarks, or mirth-inspiring anecdotes. But for the interest imparted to particular seasons by special visits of Divine mercy, his course was as even and uninterrupted as can well be imagined. Had there been more of the wild dashing stream, now almost dry, and again breaking over its banks, and less of the steady, quiet river, it would have been easier to write his biography.

His *industry* was remarkable, leading him to fill up his whole time with something useful, and prompting him to work, as it would seem, for the very love of work itself. How he ever got through the labour of his large charge at Elizabethtown, preaching so many sermons, attending so many evening meetings, making so many family visits, hearing so many Bible and Catechetical Classes, spending so many hours with the sick and dying, and attending so many funerals—to say nothing of Committees, Boards, and Church Judicatories—was always a puzzle to me, and is so yet. It can only be explained by saying he allowed himself no idle hours. Seldom did he leave home except on public business, no matter what the heat or the unhealthiness of the season. No prominent name was seen reg-

istered less frequently at the sea-shore, or the spring-side, or the mountain-top. While he uttered no harsh censures on his brother ministers for taking annual holidays, he was always at home, and ready to listen to the cry of sorrow, come from what quarter it might. The care of an invalid daughter may have had something to do in fixing this habit, but with him it certainly became a second nature. His people were always on his mind, and he could not bear the thought of being out of the way when his presence was needed.

There was, too, an intrepidity in him quite above what any one, on a slight acquaintance, would be apt to give him credit for. No man could be bolder or more ready to seize giant iniquity by the horns, whenever he became convinced that great principles were involved, or the welfare of Church and State imperilled. It was for the very purpose of sounding an alarm at the approach of danger that he felt himself stationed on the walls of Zion, and never on such occasions did he hesitate to lift up his voice like a trumpet.

At one time, a series of horse-races was projected in the neighbourhood, and he at once threw himself into the breach, proclaiming a Fast, and calling a solemn assembly, and so thundering out the terrors of the Lord as to turn the whole tide of popular feeling to the side

of God and right. No triumph could be more complete. The impression of his sermon on that awful day still lingers on many a mind. At a later time, strong and persistent efforts were made to establish a regular Sabbath communication between Elizabethtown and the city of New York, by means of a line of steamboats, countenanced by not a few of the Doctor's friends, and respectable citizens. But here, too, he was found unyielding as a rock. It was enough for him to be convinced that the enterprise was a violation of the fourth commandment, and fraught with injury to the souls of men. These things tried the mettle of the man, as well as the fidelity of the minister, and he did not falter for a moment. If he did not pluck off the hair of the lovers of pleasure and gain more than of God, like Nehemiah, he withstood them to the face, as did Paul, and was successful.

No trait of his character was more prominent than *punctuality* — a punctuality that left him little patience with the large tribe of dilatory and laggard folks. It was strange to find him a minute behind time when an appointment had been made. The people soon came to understand that when the minister said seven for the commencement of service, in the pulpit or conference room, he did not mean eight. An incident of this

sort is well remembered. There was to be a Funeral at half past three, just at the close of public service; but the Doctor had a long-winded brother to preach for him, who kept on and on, until his patience was utterly exhausted. After looking, and twisting, and wriggling, for a long time, he could stand it no longer, but seizing the preacher by the coat, brought him to a sudden halt. Another illustration of a more serious nature may be given. The Doctor announced that he would preach, on a certain evening, in the "Stone School House," at Lyon's Farms. In the course of the day preceding the appointed evening, a violent storm set in, accompanied by a high wind, which gathered the snow in deep drifts, and rendered travelling exceedingly tedious and disagreeable. But the knowledge of their minister's punctuality induced many, with great difficulty, to make their way to the place, though they doubted whether even his courage would surmount the unusual violence of the storm for three miles of road. One person says he secretly rejoiced in the thought that they should now get ahead of the Pastor. Others, by whose houses he passed, saw him going, and, ashamed to be thus outdone, breasted the fury of the storm, and the room was crowded to overflowing. That evening,

he took for his text,—"The Master is come and calleth for thee;" and the service was blessed to the awakening of a number of individuals. This was one of the early incidents in the great revival of 1817. Gray-headed men, still living, say that the Master called them that dreary night.

All this, however, is but a very imperfect view of a man, who, for nearly sixty years, was a burning and shining light among the churches of our land. Not only is his record on high, but he lives in the hearts of multitudes, to whom his name will be fragrant forever.

Affectionately Yours,

DAVID MAGIE.

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## VII.

From the Rev. M. C. Sutphen.

Philadelphia, *November* 16, 1863.

Dear Sir:

It is with sincere pleasure that I comply with your request to furnish some reminiscences of my venerated late colleague—Dr. McDowell.

Although I was born within a mile of his native place, and he had known my family for three generations, yet my acquaintance with him dates with our association in the pastorate of the Spring Garden Church,

of this city. You will not, therefore, expect of me the characteristics which marked his earlier so much as those which distinguished his later years. And if his life's morning was bright, surely its evening was blessed. As the natural sunset sheds a splendour and beauty peculiar, so the sunset of this eminent man of God.

Among many qualities which adorned his old age, mention deserves to be made of his indomitable energy. This ever distinguishing trait, and contributing in no small degree to the extraordinary success which crowned his early efforts, the frosts of eighty winters failed to prostrate or enfeeble. Increasing infirmities with many dishearten, so that they shrink from the prosecution of labours in which they have long engaged, as well as from new undertakings. But not thus with Dr. McDowell. His resolute will exacted of his body, even after it had become infirm, its wonted toil. The same erectness which was observed in more vigorous years he maintained so long as his failing limbs availed to support him. He persisted in his habitual early rising until weakness compelled its discontinuance; and, with self sacrificing perseverance, he fulfilled the duties which he had long discharged, whether of a domestic, pastoral or ecclesiastical charac-

ter. Never without a severe struggle did he relinquish any labour which he had been wont to perform for his family, the individual church to which he ministered, or for the Church universal. Accordingly, death found him girded with much of the harness in which he had toiled through life. Surely, his was the motto :—

"Ne'er think the victory won,
"Nor once at ease sit down ;
"Thy arduous work will not be done
"Till thou hast got the crown."

Another characteristic of his advanced years was the admirable manner in which he accomodated himself to the changing demands of the offices which he filled. It is not infrequent that energy remains to the aged without the power of adaptation, so that, though anxious to continue useful they are not permitted. But in Dr. McDowell there was a happy appreciation of and conformity to the proprieties of the services he performed. This was strikingly manifest in his pulpit ministrations. Even after disease had diminished usual rapidity of utterance, his prayers and sermons were most appropriately timed, so that, until sight as well as voice failed him, his preaching varied but little from that of his palmy days, when delighted crowds hung upon his lips.

Still another point I will notice, is the beautiful

manner in which his graces developed towards the close of his life. As is well known, for about sixteen months before his death, he was physically incompetent to public service, and was shut out in great measure from the world. This relief I have been happy of regard as a rest granted to him here promissory of the more perfect rest of Heaven. Like Joshua and Caleb he was permitted to enjoy an earthly Canaan before entering the Heavenly. God seemed to call him aside from his incessant toils to special communion with himself here, preparatory to eternal fellowship hereafter; and this season was largely spent in pious reading and meditation. Frequently in my visits I found him perusing some devotional work, and especially he appeared to enjoy the incomparable writings of Bunyan. It was also improved in grateful recollection of the past, as well as faithful preparation for and hopeful contemplation of the future.

The death of Dr. McDowell was eminently consistent with his life, and such as all may well desire to die. It was literally a sleep. The only sad experience was his inability to speak; but although he could not give verbal expression to his thoughts and feelings, yet he failed not by signs to communicate to relatives and friends his continued affection and assured hope of

Heaven. On one occasion, shortly before his departure, I asked him if the Saviour he had so often recommended to others was precious. His countenance at once lighted up, as with a ravishing joy, while thrice, in the most emphatic manner, he intimated assent. Truly fitting end for one who had comforted so many in their passage through the dark valley.

Such are some of the rays of light which emanated from the closing hours of the life of this distinguished Father in Israel; and I shall always refer with gratitude to that Providence which associated me with him on earth, while I rejoice in that grace which permits me to expect fellowship with him in Heaven.

Truly yours,

M. C. SUTPHEN.

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## VIII.

From the Rev. Thomas H. Skinner, D. D.

Newport,* *July 15th*, 1863.

My Dear Sir:

In compliance with your request, I give you my impressions of the character of the late Dr. John McDowell. You do not expect me to speak of him at

* This letter was written while Dr. Skinner, was passing his summer vacation at Newport.

length: this is your own undertaking; and I rejoice that you have gratified his friends by yielding to their desire of a memoir of him. You are engaged in a good work: the life of such a man deserves to be well written.

I became acquainted with him in the early part of his ministry at Elizabethtown, when I resided seven months in his family as his theological pupil. I claim not that I was, when so young, competent to judge of him, especially in his character and work as a minister, but my means of acquaintance with him were peculiar, and I received, and, on retrospection of his finished course, I retain, convictions of his worth, according to which I cannot but place him among the first ministers and disciples of our Divine Master I have personally known. I am persuaded that I could have found no situation in our Church at that time, more favourable to my preparation for the sacred office than that which his kindness offered me. The Theological Seminary at Princeton was not established: there were men of more renown in the Presbyterian ministry, but I think I should have gained, on the whole, by no exchange of position. I am sure that no one who is to be a minister should willingly forego the advantages of a thorough Seminary training; but if these are not to be

had, it would be difficult to find better than I enjoyed in my early intimacy with Dr. McDowell.

He was not distinguished as a speculative theologian, or a critic of Scripture: he had less philosophy and less learning than some of his brethren; but there was not one among them of sounder theological views, or better instructed, or more firmly rooted and grounded, in the Biblical system of doctrine. Next to the Bible, and as the best book-interpreter of its substantive teaching, he received, after thorough and renewed study of it, the Westminster Confession; every article and item of which he treated in course in the pulpit, and then gave the sermons he preached on it to the public, in two octavo volumes. He knew it from a child, and, in his maturity, as a minister, it was the summary and the standard of his belief; with which his preaching was never consciously discordant. No one was farther than he from the idolatry of "the Symbol;" not the Confession, but the Bible was his authority and his measure in preaching. A preacher more entirely and emphatically Biblical, I have never heard—always, on all topics, he spake as the "Oracle of God;" making the Confession itself, and all books, doctrines and teachings of men, amenable to the arbitrament of Holy Scripture. Nevertheless, as he stood

pledged before God and the world to the Westminster Confession, as containing the Biblical system of doctrine, he was, to his life's end, faithful to that pledge. In Faith and in Discipline he was an earnest and a consistent Presbyterian. With the most exemplary catholicism, with the most cordial acknowledgment of the churchship and ministry, as well as membership, of other denominations of Christians, he had a very intelligent and decided preference of his own; and his thinking and teaching, his conversation and piety, his ecclesiastical and public life, were always true to the theology and order of the celebrated Calvinistic symbol, the standard of Presbyterianism. He was, by no means, ultra or extreme in his ecclesiastical polemics, or in disciplinary measures: on one or two points he was stricter than some of his brethren in his construction of the Confession; but he was an extremist in nothing. I regard it as one of my chief privileges in preparing for the ministry, that I had such intimacy with a mind so truly liberal and genial, and exempt from every kind of narrowness and prejudice, as his; but I never knew one more settled in its convictions: it was remarkably free from sectarian exclusiveness, but it was also remarkably fixed and firm in its denominational attachments and tenets.

I have always classed him with the best preachers of his day. He was not equal to some of them in the higher exhibitions of eloquence; in depth and compass of thought; in ingenuity and originality of plan; in the use of the figures of rhetoric; in the finish and elegance of style; but in the more solid excellences of discourse, in matter, in ease, simplicity and clearness of method, in earnestness and directness of address, in soundness and conclusiveness of reasoning, in perspicuity, and pre-eminently in applying proof-texts and illustrations from the Bible, and concentrating every thing, from first to last, on the main point of his discourse, he was excelled by no one I have known. In the average of its productions, his pulpit was in the first order. No preacher is always equal to himself: from his own level of performance, which was high, he very seldom descended. If his discourse was not splendid or eloquent, it was, with rare exceptions, exact and lucid in method, compact, solid, and it was always natural and simple. He composed with great ease, treating his subject with reference to his end; restricting his analysis rigidly within that limit; avoiding tenuous distinctions and definitions; unambitious of rhetorical embellishment and polish; wholly engaged in carrying his point, he advanced with great rapidity,

and often finished his sermon at a sitting. As good discourses as his, made as quickly, I am sure I never heard. And without much novelty as to manner, there was uncommon variety in his preaching. He adapted it to the constantly varying wants of his parish, with which he kept himself particularly acquainted. And he had a large store of topics. He treated, in detail, both the doctrine and the morality of the Gospel. There was nothing in the system of Christian truth, which he thought unsuitable as a vehicle of the renewing and sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit; there was great breadth in the sphere of his subject-matter. The one theme, *Christ Crucified*, had indefinite diversity of exhibition and enforcement, under his laborious ministry. His treasury of subjects was rich, and he brought forth out of it, in his very abundant preachings, things new and old. His dispensation of the word did not want the highest evidence of excellence, the attestation and seal of the Spirit. While I was with him, there were almost constant refreshings of Divine Grace in his parish, and, both before and afterwards, he was familiar with these decisive tokens of God's approval and blessing.

It was, in a high degree characteristic of his preaching, that it was suited particularly to the character

and changing circumstances of his parish. His thorough acquaintance with his parish gave the word of command to his selection of texts and subjects, and shaped, coloured and attempered his discourses on them. He preached to his people as a flock, and not as an auditory merely. His Elizabethtown parish, when I was with him, was divided into districts, in each of which, in turn, he met a gathering of his people on a week-day, and gave them a familiar sermon. In season and out of season, publicly and from house to house, he abounded in parish preaching. The pulpit, with him, except when he preached out of his parish, was but an instrument — the chief instrument of his pastorate, to realize his ideal of which he made everything subservient. Indeed, excellent as he was as a Preacher, his chief distinction was the completeness and all-sidedness of his example as a Pastor. In this, unquestionably, he was a rare model to the parish minister. There was no means of pastoral efficiency of which he did not strive to make full proof. Bible class teaching, catechising, parochial visitation, the care of the poor, attention to the sick and to families in affliction; conference with individuals, sympathy with his people in their sorrows and joys; proper concern even for their material interests; friendly and thoughtful oversight

of the common school; variation of his agency to meet appropriately new emergencies in his parish; every thing in the entire compass of pastoral enterprise and prudence, had place and proportion in his parochial assiduity. Among all the faithful, sound-minded, zealous, devoted, successful Pastors that I have known, in the course of a ministry of fifty years, there is not one that stands higher in my esteem, in the sum of pastoral excellences, than my own revered and lamented Pastor, Dr. John McDowell.

His application to parish work did not withdraw him from the more public spheres of ministerial activity. Among all his brethren who more constant, more punctual, more laborious than he, at ecclesiastical meetings, more engaged in the interest of missions, and of theological education and general learning; or more earnestly and patiently occupied in the various forms of evangelistic labour? Had he not been at the head of a parish, had he been entirely a minister at large, his interest could hardly have been greater in the work of domestic and general evangelism. There was no discordance between the intensity and fulness of his pastoral engagements and his extra parochial fidelity and influence. The spirit of his pastorate was evangelistic. Not his parish, but the world, was his field. His church

was a missionary institution. He trained it to be an agent in the general cause of Christianity. His work out of his parish reacted upon and forwarded his pastorate, and this reciprocally forwarded and stimulated that.

There was a beautiful consistency, a sweet harmony between Dr. McDowell's appearance in general society and his ministerial character and position. In his social relations and demeanour, he was still the Christian Minister, still the Pastor. There was no reserve in his manners; he was affable, cheerful, easy in his intercourse with the world; but no one who had been unacquainted with him was ever surprised at learning that he was a Minister of the Gospel. In company he might, at any time, if asked, take the lead in worship without being under the necessity of passing through an abrupt change in either his manners or frame of mind. He made no ostentation of religion; he avoided worldly complaisance. He was never a man of strife; he never connived at wrong doing. In matters of social prudence or expediency he was a pattern of discretion and good sense.

My residence with him gave me opportunity of knowing him in a sphere in which, more than in any other, a man appears most decisively and unequivocally just as

he is,—the bosom of the family. I was never an inmate of a more cheerful, pleasant, happy home than his; but worldliness had no license to enter it. He was in his household, as he was in his parish and in general society, consistent with himself as the special representative of Christianity. Under appropriate modifications, his family was a model to the families of his parish. There was a church in his house. When his family came together for worship, morning and evening, he was not accustomed to give remarks of his own; but, when I was with him, he united with prayers and the reading of the Scriptures, the constant reading of the Commentary of Scott, and the occupations and pleasures of his house were such as beautifully became the character of its consecrated head. I cannot recall the scenes of either grief or pleasure that I witnessed in his family without a revived consciousness, at this distant day, of the serene, chastened, and amiable piety by which they were marked. During my residence with him he was not without painful domestic afflictions, with which he continued to be deeply familiar till near the end of his pilgrimage. Nothing in human life is more lovely than such unmurmuring submission and gentleness and tenderness of spirit as he exemplified under them.

I ought to speak tenderly of the peculiarity of his inward life. He was not himself free in expressing even to his friends the frames and habitudes of his spirit. Except as revealing itself in his ministry and in his general character, there were few, if any, so far as I know, who had the means of intimate acquaintance with his private walk with God. I have not heard that he kept a diary — if he did, I should be surprised to find that it contained much about fluctuations, in his "experience." There were few indications of these in his external life, so far as I was acquainted with it. I should suppose, from what I knew of him, that his subjective piety was calmly emotional rather than sensational, or much diversified, like that of Brainerd, or Martyn, or Payson, by contrasted variations, high elevations or deep depression of feeling. The impression which I received of it, from personal intercourse with him, was that of habitual peace and cheerfulness. Religion, as represented in his example, was not severe and ascetic, but social, amiable, attractive. It was evident, that as he recommended it to others in his ministry, as the good part, the true portion of man, so it was his own supreme happiness; that he had in himself the earnest of the "purchased possession;" that his work as a minister was not merely functional; that

he did not preach an unknown Christ; that he was himself a traveller to that Heavenly country to which he invited and allured others to travel. He was, to myself, when I was his pupil, a son of consolation in my spiritual conflicts. I cannot think it possible that such an adept as he was in conferences with troubled souls, such a minister of peace to the disquieted and dejected in spirit, could have been habitually without a vivid sense of the peace of God in himself. I have always regarded him, not as an Edwards, or a Howe, or an Owen, or a Flavel, in the deep and various workings of spiritual feeling, but as a bright and lovely example of the present "blessedness of the righteous," "the life of God in the soul of man." I have, at this moment, in lively recollection instances of his sympathy with myself in my early religious disquietudes, which renew my love for him as a spiritual comforter and guide, while I am writing this sentence.

There was a trait of nobleness in the nature of this good minister of Christ. He was a genial, generous, liberal-spirited man. Grace found a favourable soil to root itself and grow in the peculiarities of his physical constitution. While it sanctified these, they became choice instruments of its power—it beautified, it glorified itself through them. They gave a tincture, a

colour, a glow to his ministry and his piety. By means of them he became, in a degree to which otherwise he doubtless would not have attained, like "the disciple whom Jesus loved," both in his official and private character. His mindfulness of early friends, after long separation from them; his precious letters of condolence to them in affliction; his generous sympathy with young men in their trials and struggles with difficulty; the non-interference of his pastoral and ecclesiastical labours with private and individual claims on his time and care, these, which distinguished his whole career, were specially dignified and adorned by the naturalness and spontaneity which signalized them all.

On the whole, according to my maturest thought, my settled convictions, there were very few in his day that deserve a higher place among models of pastoral and private worth than this venerable man of God. He began in early life the service of his Divine Master; for nearly three score years, without any intermission, and I think I might almost say with *scarcely* a vacation for rest, he laboured as his minister, in word and doctrine, to the latest days of a life of more than four score; abounding in the arduous duties of the pastorate, bringing forth precious fruit, even to the last,

and ceasing from his cheerful toil only to breathe out his spirit, and depart to be with Christ.

I am, very dear Sir,

With the highest regard, yours,

THOMAS H. SKINNER.

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## IX.

From the Rev. S. H. Cox, D. D.

New York, *December* 19, 1863.

My Dear Brother :

The late Reverend John McDowell, D. D., of Philadelphia, I well knew, and love him yet, not only with high and filial esteem, but with reverence due to exalted excellence ; also with the affection proper to a mature friendship, at once, I trust, mutual, personal, tender, and of immortal continuance.

It is in these relations, my dear friend and brother in Christ, that you invoke, from my pen, some memorial of him ; and I respond with all my heart ; if I may be helped to make some fitting contribution, acceptable, possibly useful, with others to the biographical pyramid, which I am glad, my dear Dr. Sprague, that you are engaged to rear to his memory, more to the glory of the Great Author of the new creation,

who made him what he was in this world, and what he is in that brighter and better world, where all the elect of God shall ultimately be at home, happy and holy forever.

It was about autumn, in the year 1811, when I first saw and heard Dr. McDowell in one of the pulpits of Newark, N. J. A stranger to me as I to him, I had no idea of his character, no prejudice for him or against him, apart from the wrong feelings of a worldly mind. Knowing not his Divine Master, nor my own heart, when I was a young student of the Law in that city, (then only a large and beautiful town,) when *the present* was all to me, *the future* an indefinite mist of inscrutable possibilities, the importance of which, as I then thought and felt, was almost practically nothing.

At that time he was the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Elizabethtown, six miles to the South of us, then no other church in that town — now also a city, with several others of the same faith, order, name. His text, on that occasion was, *Quench not the Spirit*: 1 Thes., V, 19 — as I could never forget.

After due explanation of the office-work of the Holy Ghost in the Divine economy of redemption, where his soundness could not fail of a correct demonstration, he gave reasons why we must not *quench* his influence.

The logical sequence and array of those reasons I cannot now reproduce. They were, however, well disposed, masterly in distribution and aggression, especially on the mind and the conscience of the sinner. I was not the only one that felt it. The moral consciousness of many of us was just impaled and kept in durance — not vile; as the shafts of truth struck us, from his well poised archery; shafts selected from the *thesaurus*, the armory of God, and sped as from the quiver of the Almighty. At least two of his impressive thoughts I can rehearse. First, said he, "The work of the Spirit is to us proximate, and in order last, as compared with the offices of the Father and the Son. Hence only resist Him effectually, grieve Him away, *quench* totally the flame He would enkindle, and you are lost! You have then in Him, alienated God forever from you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, all the Persons of the Godhead. There will be another—never, to debate with you and persuade you." He paused, as he spoke it. Every word weighed heavy as a millstone. He felt as his grave, and clear, and solemn articulation announced it. It seemed to resound, as the dirge of lost souls. We felt as we heard it. Second —

In conclusion, said he, "You seem to feel it. Alas!

without true faith, *the fruit of the Spirit*, you will all, I know, forget it, till the day of judgment. Wherefore, yield to his holy and heavenly influence this instant; and whatever of this sermon you forget, remember, I pray you, O remember the text—*Quench not the Spirit.*"

It was seemingly a living sermon, with living effect. It was the pure and simple Gospel of Christ that he preached. I feel it yet. His honest directness, godly sincerity, manly propriety of diction; himself hid behind his Master, made him such a preacher, for good effect, as no Archbishop in many ages equals; and few devout Presbyters of whatever age or name. He had perpetually a succession of revivals; but they were rational as the truth of Scripture, and not delighting in mere sensation, noise, extravagance, disorder, delusion and stony ground experiences.

His general character as a man, a Christian, a minister of Christ, a theologian, a preacher, a pastor, a friend, a person every way so eminent, so useful, so honoured, so esteemed, so loved, is well and widely known; and glad I am that in your hands, my dear brother, it will be more extensively portrayed, appreciated; so exemplary, so beneficent. Of those whose hands devoted me in office, at my Ordination, only two or three of the large and venerable old Presbytery of

Jersey remain. In that constellation, I rejoice instinctively to remember HIM as a star of magnitude now *fixed* in the firmament of the new creation. He was just thirteen years my senior, then proportionally felt to be, as then it was, considerably greater than in periods much subsequent.

He was distinguished for practical, punctual, symmetrical, assiduous, executive service in the Church; local, provincial, national, universal: this the *ratio semper eadem* of his excellence. He was eminently Scriptural in all his ministrations, as well as steady, sound, comprehensive, edifying—except too possibly to some who desired almost any other qualification in a preacher, rather than the last I mention. I have preached for him, with him; in times of revival, of greatly quickened interest among his flock, and often, too; and if in *any thing* our general views of doctrine or theosophy were at all various—I write knowing what—our practical agreement was moral identity; in his own words, as I think I remember them; I "clinched all the nails he drove, he all mine." He was no bigot, no hobby-driver, no jealous, consequently no mean detracter from the just estimation of others, and when, in the mourning times of excission, in 1837–38, I record it from his own faithful disclosures to myself, few bosoms more

laboured with ingenuous grief than his own. I could here say more, much more, but—I forbear.

Dr. McDowell was ever industrious to a proverb, a rare paragon of that great virtue; as distinguished also for a genial and apostolic sympathy; for a care and an interest toward young ministers and candidates for the ministry, which was truly paternal; as, in some good degree, it was alike characteristic and rare also. Oh, how excellent, as compared with some opposites, that many have had to remember, not one to approve. A character stiff with dignity, inaccessible, factitiously unkind, wealthy, selfish, while technically glorying in a transcendental disinterestedness; *disinterested* in all the trials and the wants of others; in such contrasts, if true religion is lovely, how truly amiable and excellent in the sight of God and man, are the name and the memory of John McDowell. I am happy, both as a witness and a beneficiary, to attest his excellence, *glorifying God in him.*

But I must conclude. A friend has just put in my hand a good sermon of Rev. David Magie, D. D., of Elizabeth, N. J., well written, and full of truth, commemorative of his life and character, which I commend to your perusal and use. I was not at his Funeral, but last May 24th, at the General Assembly, I felt

it a privilege to preach for his worthy successor, Rev. M. C. Sutphen, in the presence of a large assemblage of his friends, his weeping and honoured widow included; then and there to anticipate, in reference to Dr. McDowell, the substance of this document, and to express my sympathetic and humble and most fraternal impressions of his worth.

Faithfully and fraternally yours in Jesus,

SAMUEL HANSON COX.

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## X.

From the Rev. Thomas L. Janeway, D. D.

Philadelphia, *March* 1, 1864.

Dear Sir:

You have asked for my recollections of my lamented and venerable friend, Dr. John McDowell, and I cheerfully comply with your request. My father's residence in this city, and the annual meetings here of the General Assembly, made me, from my boyhood, acquainted with the distinguished men of our Church, among whom I recall Dr. McDowell. He was a frequent guest of my father's, and I believe, on such occasions, always preached for him. I can remember his name as connected with the great revivals which honoured and

blessed his ministry. My attendance at the Seminary at Princeton brought him more frequently and intelligently before me. After my licensure, and some missionary labour performed, I was prepared to settle, and he kindly commended me to the people of Rahway, and there I became, in my early ministry, his near neighbour. He presided at the meeting which called me, and preached my Ordination Sermon, and I remember, on that day, he gave me advice and told me facts which were of incalculable advantage to a young and inexperienced preacher. Our congregations joined, and in the school houses on the border we often met for common labour. To me he was uniformly kind, and he gave me a prominence I hardly deserved. A frequent guest at his table, I could go to him at all times, with almost filial confidence for advice.

In those days, the Presbytery of Elizabethtown had their annual visitations to their different churches. The ministers, two and two, went forth, for a series of days, preaching, exhorting, and confirming the minds of the disciples—Dr. McDowell kindly, on such occasions, insisting that I should be his companion; and many an hour of pleasant intercourse have I spent in his society, and many a phase of human nature did he present to my mind, and from his long and varied ex-

perience did I learn to labour in the vineyard. That God placed my early ministry in that region, and under such influences, in all probability, gave me fitness for any usefulness I have been permitted to exercise in the Church of our Master. Eternity only will disclose how much of mercy to me, and may I not hope to others, my settlement in Rahway, then an obscure village, and owing to Dr. McDowell's kind influence, was ordained to accomplish. His removal to Philadelphia separated us. Never failing, in my occasional visits to the city of my birth, to call and pay him my respectful attention, he met me with the same kind treatment, and exhibited the pleasure he felt. Years passed, and we became near neighbours, when I settled as a Pastor in Philadelphia. Soon after, his trials began—trials overruled to the glory of God and the extension of his Church; and when, to the amazement of all, at his time of life, he determined to commence a new enterprise, after my surprise at his apparent hardihood, I rejoiced in the prospect of his success. It was at my suggestion in Presbytery that the present important site of the Spring Garden Church was selected. It was near my church, and I knew the region, and the likelihood of its great enlargement. When he was installed, he required that I should

preach the Sermon; and when the ground was broken for the trench of the foundation, he was kind enough to insist that I should be the principal speaker. I sympathized in his struggle—I marvelled at his perseverance—I wondered how he could endure it—but the building rose, the people gathered, and valuable families were gained to our cause. And when the new house was crushed in by a mass of snow, and his friends all seemed crushed too, he, with his characteristic faith and energy, girded his loins to his work, and rose stronger from the blow. I felt thankful to hear, as Chairman of a Committee appointed at a meeting of the Pastors of our churches, the assurance of their sympathy, and the promise of effective assistance. He was overcome and wept when he heard of their kindness.

The church arose from its rubbish in brighter beauty, and remaineth to this day, his monument, and, by the goodness of God, the honour of a faithful servant. Few knew what all these efforts cost him: what toil, what weariness, what anxiety. He told me that five days in every week, for two years, were spent soliciting aid for his church edifice, and his success was wonderful. Before he was called hence, he could rejoice over the child of his old affections, as out of debt, and like-

ly to run a career of honourable usefulness. I felt it a privilege to attend, as I did, worship in his church, when it was opened, one Sabbath evening in each month. He always expected me to occupy a seat in his pulpit, and I went there as a matter of course. He received it as a respectful kindness, and the sympathy of a younger disciple. Our churches met, on several occasions, for union meetings, on consecrated days. My people always welcomed him, for he was extensively known and greatly revered among them. Few ministers, a younger with an elder and more honoured servant of God, have, in Divine Providence, in a period extending over thirty-three years, been so commingled in services, and the younger permitted, in after life, to return the kindness he received at the outstart from his venerable friend. Eight years before his death, loss of health compelled me to resign my charge and retire to the country, in hope of its recovery. He expressed great regret, and was pleased to say that he should miss me from his circle. Again Providence brought me into close fellowship with him, when I became Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions. He was President of the Board, and Chairman of its Executive Committee. As long as increasing infirmities permitted, he met me in Committee every week. I recall his kind

expression of welcome, and the confidence he gave me, amid the dangers and embarrassments of the situation. And he rejoiced when the Board began to emerge from its difficulties, and his last efforts were given to a cause, over which, for thirty years, he had watched, and laboured, and fainted not.

If I may be permitted to give my impression of Dr. McDowell, as a Preacher, which I early received, and which all my intimacy afterwards confirmed, it was that he possessed great fervour and unction of manner, and that he made every one feel that he was a good man, and sincerely desirous to save souls — his sensibilities were easily excited, and he often wept over sinners in his anxiety for their salvation.

Others will tell you of his devotion to his life-long work — what a model Pastor he was — how marvellous was his success, and what glorious revivals God honored him with; the devoted attachment of his flock to his person and his ministry; the exactitude of his habits, the amazing amount of labour that he performed, and so on, till he fell with his harness on — a striking instance, in these days of change, of an aged minister dying surrounded by his flock. I saw him shortly before his departure, — the same man as ever amid the wreck of his humanity, and my visit seemed

to gratify him. I helped, with devout men, to carry him to his resting-place, till his Master calls him at the last day. It is among the mercies of my life that I knew him so well, and enjoyed so much of his confidence. I hope to meet him in a brighter and purer world, to renew our friendship, and unite in the holier worship of God.

I am with great regard, truly yours,

THOMAS L. JANEWAY.

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XI.

From Mrs. Lydia A. Holdich.*

Hoboken.

Dear Sir:

I take pleasure in giving you a few of my early recollections of one of the best and noblest men I have ever known.

A child is a true physiognomist, and, from the time I remember any thing, I remember what trust I placed in Dr. McDowell's word. I felt that he was always true. Fancy brings him before me now, as I used to see him in my childish days. I recall the morning and evening prayer, in which there was little variety, but which always seemed solemn and fervent, though very calm. There was sincerity in the tones of his voice —

*Wife of the Rev. Dr. Holdich.

nothing was ever put on—there was no exaggeration. I liked his short sentences. He never used an involved sentence in preaching, conversation or prayer. His faith in prayer was often tested. He has called his congregation together to fast and pray for rain during a distressing drought, and I think, on each occasion, rain was sent, apparently in answer to prayer. I once spoke to a wise and thoughtful Christian friend of the marked answers that Dr. McDowell's public prayers had received. She replied, "he honours God publicly, and therefore God honours him." Dr. Morse, an old physician in Elizabethtown, used often to say to his patients, "Now I've done all that I can for you, only one thing remains,—Dr. McDowell's prayers." This used to be said seriously, although Dr. Morse was not himself a professor of religion. And really there were striking facts to notice in this connection, one of which I can distinctly recall. I knew a lady who lay so low that her physician said she would not survive the night. It was the evening of the weekly lecture, and the daughter of the sick lady, feeling that all earthly hope was vain, sent a request that her mother should be remembered in her Pastor's prayers. A remarkable change in her symptoms suddenly took place, and to this day the daughter loves to think that the mother was spared

in answer to her minister's prayer. It was a common saying among us children,—"It will rain on Sunday, for Dr. McDowell will pray for it." I can now recall his prayer in my aged grandmother's room, with his impressive application of the 91st Psalm to herself. It marked the Psalm for me then and ever after. The children of his congregation loved him dearly, and yet there was nothing caressing in his manner, although he was always kind and considerate towards them.

His habit of life was very simple. I can see him now working with his own hands, in the garden in which he took no little pleasure, assisted by two faithful coloured men, each of whom lived with him a number of years. He generally raised the earliest and finest vegetables of the season, and his neighbours were very apt to profit by his industry in this respect. At the foot of the garden there was a fine orchard, and when he sometimes found me, with a book from his library, curled up among the crooked branches of an apple tree, his invariable salutation was,—"Well, little Miss Romantic." He catechised us children regularly, I think, once a month—it may have been once a quarter. He required us to learn the Shorter Catechism perfectly, and liked us to commit the Larger Catechism also. Many of us went through the verbose answers of the

latter for love of him, and our reward was the "Very well, very well indeed," pronounced emphatically, as he looked first at us and then around the room, as if he wished others to participate in his own satisfaction. When we were older we attended his lectures on Church History, which were commenced by questions on the Catechism. His course in Church History was narrow but thorough. What he taught he made us understand clearly. Whatever he undertook to teach was well taught, and I have often thought that his success in life was partly owing to his understanding so exactly what he had the ability to accomplish. Milner's Church History formed the basis of his lectures. He read the lecture for the ensuing week to us, after examining us on the one read the preceding Wednesday evening. Notes were taken, and thus those who had no opportunity to study from books were able to understand the lesson. It gave many a taste for books, and a sense of their value. A volume in which they found the whole lecture, and more besides, was a real treasure. Some of the best scholars were those who had fewest literary advantages. My heretical tendencies were early developed. I crossed with pen and ink the dogmatical answer to the question in the Larger Catechism, "Can those who have never heard the Gospel, know not

Jesus Christ and believe not on Him, &c.," (I have not the book by me to quote it exactly and fully now), "be saved, if they are ever so anxious to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the laws of the religion they profess?" but told no one that I had done so. One evening the Doctor had forgotten his own Confession of Faith, a thing which I think he never did before nor since. There was no Catechism but mine for him to borrow. It was fairly forced from me by circumstances. I trembled when he took it. He asked us our questions as calmly as usual; heard our Church History lesson, gave out that for the subsequent evening, and then took that crossed question for a text. In no mild nor measured terms did he denounce the presumption of the young person who dared to expunge the words written by wise and holy men, like the compilers of the Catechism. The question went around the class in whispers, "Whose Catechism is it?" And I, blushing and crying, had to say, "It is mine." Ah! he was very severe that time, but he learned, in the latter part of his life, that conscience cannot be squared by rule and compass, and that all Christian people cannot look at truth through Calvinistic spectacles. His faith in the doctrines of his own Church continued as strong as ever, but he certainly became more tole-

rant to the creed of others, as he advanced in life. I think the circumstance I have narrated was never spoken of outside the class by either of us. I was bitterly mortified, but not angry, for I knew that, though very much in earnest, he was never cross nor unkind.

One of Dr. McDowell's peculiarities was a dislike to changes of any kind. It annoyed him to have the smallest article of furniture transposed. He kept the same servants many years. Some of them were characters in their way. One very old coloured man was named Jack. During one of the very general revivals with which Dr. McDowell's congregation was so often blessed, Jack became a Christian. Perfectly uneducated and of weak intellect, he yet gave undoubted evidence, by his changed habits and humble teachableness, of his love for the Redeemer. Jack was always glad to come in to prayers after he became a Christian, and he liked to be questioned with the family on points of Christian doctrine. But he had one invariable answer to every question,—"The Lord Jesus Christ." Poor old man! he had learned to love that name, and his heart and what mind he had were full of it. We often remarked the ingenuity with which Dr. McDowell would put the question which made his answer a correct one.

Never was any one freer from envy or emulation, and never had the Presbyterian Church a more distinguished lover. I know that his own personal interests were as nothing to him in comparison with the interests of his Church. When, by his desire, the Second Church in Elizabeth was set off from his own, some one said, "It will weaken your congregation." "Yes," he simply answered, "but it will strengthen Presbyterianism." Some one told him of a comparison that had been made between himself and the young Pastor, in favour of the latter. He said, "I am not surprised; when that church was formed, I took Saint John's motto for mine,—He must increase,—I am contented to decrease."

His words were few but impressive; his incidental remarks will long be remembered, and have helped to form the characters around him. A person has often said how pleased she was to have him sanction a sentiment that dropped hastily from her lips. She had a near connection, who had sunk from his former station in life, through dissipated habits. A relation observed, —"How mortifying to have him in such a low scale of society." "How mortifying to have him so wicked!" was the rejoinder. Dr. McDowell turned to the last speaker with a look of approbation. "Yes, M., that

is the right sentiment — the vice is the disgrace, not the station in society."

He was very prudent and delicate in his intercourse with others. I have heard him say how well he knew the strong opposition that some members of his congregation, who afterward became his warm friends, felt for him, when he first came to settle in Elizabethtown. They did not find Dr. Kollock's eloquence, nor the personal elegance and fascinating elocution of Mr. Austin, in their young successor. But he took no notice of any apparent opposition, treated the absentees in a kind and friendly manner, and, going on in his own quiet and unostentatious way, soon drew them all back to the church. In a little while, every one loved him, and no lip opened but to speak well of him. He said that he did not care particularly for praise, ever, but that he once heard more of it than he could well bear. He was once dining with a large company in New York, at the house of his friend, Mr. C. Dubois, when, after a hard ring at the door, the loud voice of a "bustling Yankee" was heard above the clashing of knives and forks, insisting upon the servant's going in and delivering a Prospectus of Dr. McDowell's "Theological Sermons" to the gentleman of the house. When the servant objected to dis-

turbing him at dinner, the man went on to say, "Tell him he must subscribe — it's the greatest work of the day, and worth double the money we ask for it." "And I and the company sat there," continued the Doctor, "hearing it all, and I wishing myself and my man any where else." I never heard this told but once, for Dr. McDowell talked little of himself, and rarely reiterated a story.

With all his modesty, he had great consciousness of power. When the Misses G. came to open a school in Elizabeth, there was a good deal of opposition from another denomination that patronized a flourishing school of their own. Some one said, "another school will never succeed." I remember the tone of voice, mild as the breath of spring, yet firm as the granite cliff, in which Dr. McDowell replied, — "She *will* succeed, she *shall* succeed." How successful the experiment proved we all know.

He accomplished much with apparently little effort. An old servant of the family said,—"New preachers come, everybody goes after them; then they get tired and come back to the Doctor. He just goes steady on." I told him of the remark, and he said,—"Yes, I never go very fast,—just steady on, as C. says."

You know how often he was called to city churches

while Pastor of the Elizabethtown congregation. There was said to be a most touching scene before the Presbytery after a call from the Wall-Street Church had been sent to him. The Session and some of the private members of his congregation went to protest against its acceptance. Mr. Lenox, who was one of the city representation, spoke of the wants of their church; their membership was declining; their Communion table almost deserted; their social meetings breaking down. They wanted a man of Dr. McDowell's spirit, &c., &c. Up rose a poor but pious man, named Miller, who burst forth,—"He wants to take our minister because his Communion table is deserted, and his pews vacant. Let him ask himself the reason. Isn't it because of their own worldly spirit, and their want of prayer? No, Mr. Moderator, we can't give up our minister. We must have him living and dead. We want him to lead us on now; we want him to close our eyes, and talk to us of Jesus when we're dying; and we want him to lie with us in the same church-yard so that, in the morning of the resurrection, we may break ground together and go up one united body to receive the welcome of the Saviour." I have given but a feeble outline of the speech of the good old man. They say his natural eloquence thrilled the whole assembly.

I have never known such powerful and general revivals as in Dr. McDowell's congregation. How well I remember the deep silence, the almost breathless attention that used to pervade the congregation when he arose to speak to his people at such times. The church seemed like such a "gate of Heaven" to my young mind. How often I looked at its beautiful tapering spire, rising from the ancient sycamores, in the silence of a moonlight night, and thought what a sacred place it was. We children learned to reverence religious things under that ministry. I remember, on one occasion, that about eighty persons joined the church at one time. I believe it was in the month of June—at any rate it was a delicious summer's day. At this distance of time I can recall the rustle of the trees outside the church, and the mild, soft air that fanned us from the open window. How beautiful earth seemed; how near was Heaven on that day. They were closely united. I can recall the words read at the beginning of the service on that occasion. Never has the 60th of Isaiah appeared as impressive and beautiful to me as then, and so appropriate it was to the occasion. I said so to the Doctor once, and in allusion to two or three coloured persons who were of the number, he said,—"Yes, and another prophecy was

also fulfilled—Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God." Another portion of Scripture is indelibly fixed upon my mind by the occasion on which he used it, and the impressive manner in which it was read. There was a sad epidemic prevailing, which proved fatal to several female members of the congregation. One Sunday morning at that time the bell continued to toll, and Dr. McDowell did not appear. So punctual were his habits that perhaps he did not vary three minutes in the time of his appearance at church in the course of the year. He invariably left his house at the first toll of the bell. All were struck by the expression of his face, as he at length came up the middle aisle, with many folded papers in his hand, which we knew were requests for the prayers of the church. Mrs. McDowell was with him, and she told us, weeping, that they had just come from the bed-side of her friend Mrs. T——, who had been seized with the epidemic and was dying. Before the prayer, familiar ones were named as being apparently near to death, all young and useful members of society; then came even a sadder announcement; prayers for friends bereaved suddenly of the light of their household. In a low, solemn, subdued voice, when the prayer for these sufferers was over, our Pastor read,—"O, Lord, I have

heard thy speech and was afraid. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble." It seemed as if the Prophet's own voice was speaking that sublime prayer of Habakkuk's on that solemn day. Then he alluded touchingly to what was passing around us. He always improved passing events, ever watching "the signs of the times," both in his congregation and in the political horizon.

Thus, my dear Sir, I have given you some unconnected recollections of my good brother, to use as you like. Perhaps they will be of no use; perhaps some of them may help to illustrate some trait of his character.

Very truly yours,

L. A. HOLDICH.

# MEMOIR

OF THE

# Rev. WILLIAM A. McDOWELL, D. D.

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## CHAPTER I.

### His Life.

William Anderson McDowell, a younger brother of the Rev. Dr. John McDowell, was born in Lamington, N. J., on the 15th of May, 1789. He spent his very early years at home, dividing his time between the labours of the farm and the advantages of the common school. At the age of about thirteen or fourteen, he attended a Grammar School in the neighbourhood, and subsequently a school at Elizabethtown, taught by Mr. (now the Rev. Dr.) Henry Mills. He joined the Junior Class in the College of New Jersey in 1807, and graduated in 1809, having, throughout his whole course, maintained an excellent reputation for both scholarship and behaviour.

In the spring of 1810, he went to live with the Rev. Dr. Woodhull, of Freehold, as his brother had done before him, as a student of Theology; and in June of that year, he placed himself under the care of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, as a candidate for the ministry. Here he found, in the main, a congenial element, and devoted himself to his studies with much zeal, withdrawing, meanwhile, in a great measure, from society, that he might attend the more diligently to the culture of not only his mind, but especially his heart. Not only for Dr. Woodhull himself, but for his family, he seems to have formed a very strong attachment; and, though his actual residence with them was short, his attachment to them was enduring. Though his letters at this period breathe a spirit of fervent piety, he was not a little troubled with doubts in respect to his own spiritual state; and, after reading Edwards on the Affections, he for a time well nigh yielded to the conviction that he had never been the subject of a truly religious experience. He was, however, gradually relieved, in great measure, from these painful apprehensions, and his faith was generally so much in the ascendant as to render him a peaceful and happy Christian. When he was examined on experimental religion, with a view to admission to the Pres-

bytery, it was in the presence not only of the Presbytery itself, but of as many people as could sit in the church in which the meeting was held. The consequence was that he found himself greatly confused and embarrassed; and he afterwards expressed the confident conviction that such examinations, in order to the accomplishment of their legitimate object, should be conducted in a more private way.

Notwithstanding Mr. McDowell found his residence at Freehold both pleasant and profitable to him, he remained there for only a brief period: in November, 1810, he became a Tutor in Princeton College, and continued in that relation until September of the next year, pursuing his theological studies under the direction of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, then President of the College. His health having become delicate, he resolved to try the effect of a Southern climate, and, accordingly, in November, he sailed for Savannah, the residence of the Rev. Dr. Kollock, whose sister Mr. McDowell afterwards married. Under the direction of this eloquent divine, he resumed his theological studies, and continued them until the next spring. Here he had great satisfaction in having for a companion in his studies Mr. (now the Rev. Dr.) Thomas H. Skinner, whom he had previously known at

Elizabethtown, and with whom he formed a very close and enduring intimacy. A revival of religion took place in Dr. Kollock's congregation during his sojourn there, and Mr. McDowell, at Dr. K's suggestion, took an active part in it, even to delivering exhortations to large assemblages in the church—which he seems to have thought approached too near to an invasion of the clerical prerogative, though he found an apology for it in the urgency of the case. After making a visit, with his friend Mr. Skinner, to Sunbury, where he found very pleasant society, and spent a few days much to his satisfaction, he left Savannah on the 6th of April, 1812, accompanied by Mr. S., and, after stopping a little in North Carolina, proceeded Northward to his native State.

As early as the month of June, he seems to have resumed his theological studies at Princeton, and as the Seminary went into operation in August of that year, he became connected with it shortly after, his name appearing as the fifth on the catalogue. The following letter, addressed to his brother, the Rev. John McDowell, is interesting from its relation to the Seminary while it was yet in its infancy.

PRINCETON, *December* 2, 1812.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I fear you will begin to think, from my long silence, that I have forgotten you ; but it is the press of business alone that has prevented my writing. From early in the morning until late at night I am constantly engaged ; and to be able to write even now, I am under the necessity of being absent from recitation. My recitations with the class to Dr. Alexander take up most of my time. We recite every day, and our recitations are unusually long and difficult ; and to accomplish the object I have in view in spending the winter here,—namely, to prepare myself to take license in the spring, I have to apply myself with very great diligence. My being clerk also to the Theological Society, which now meets twice each week, adds considerably to the amount of my labour. So you will be able to judge how much I have upon my hands, and will readily forgive me if I should not, during the winter, write as frequently as I have been in the habit of doing.

The number of theological students, since the commencement of the session, has increased. Nine is our present number, and we are in expectation of more. Dr. Alexander devotes most of his time to us. We all love him, and often render our united thanks to God that He ever put it into the hearts of the members of the Assembly to appoint him to the Professorship. He is certainly one of the best and most exemplary of men, and I do not think a more judicious choice could have been made. The students are excellent young men. We meet together three evenings in the week for social prayer and reading the Scriptures. Our meetings are all very solemn, and I think the time is not far distant when God will revive his work in this place. There are too many fervent prayers offered up here, not to be answered. In college we have many new regulations, and much more order than formerly. Dr. Green's popularity has been considerably increased by his having adopted it as a rule to invite eight, each week, out of the Senior Class, to dine with him. An im-

portant change has been effected in the prayer-hall,—the services being marked by a much deeper solemnity than formerly. Dr. Green has introduced singing in the morning, and the students appear pleased with it.

Your affectionate brother,
W. A. McDOWELL.

Mr. McDowell continued his connection with the Seminary until May, 1813, having been licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick on the 28th of April, preceding. He accepted an invitation to preach to the congregation at Bound Brook; the result of which was, that they gave him a call to become their Pastor, which also he accepted. He was ordained and installed Pastor of that church by the same Presbytery which had licensed him, on the 22d of December following; and about the same time was married to Miss Jane Kollock, daughter of Shepard Kollock, Esq., of Elizabethtown. His connection with the congregation at Bound Brook continued less than a year. It was dissolved on the 19th of October, 1814; and, on the 15th of the next December, he was installed Pastor of the church at Morristown, N. J. He had previously declined a call from the church in Flemington.

His ministry at Morristown was alike highly acceptable and highly useful. He enjoyed, in a very unusual

degree, the affection and confidence of his people, while he, in turn, was steadily and perseveringly devoted to their best interests. But it was not very long before his health became so much impaired as to threaten the disruption of the tie that bound him to his flock. When he was twelve years of age, he suffered severely from the small pox, and never afterwards entirely recovered from the effect of it; but in the autumn of 1822, he was so seriously threatened with a pulmonary affection that it was thought expedient that he should try the effect of a milder climate. Accordingly, with the consent of his congregation, he journeyed South as far as Charleston, S. C., where he passed the winter. The effect upon his physical system was altogether invigorating; and when he returned in the Spring, his health seemed adequate to the amount of labour which he had been accustomed to perform. It was not long, however, before he relapsed into the feeble state from which he had emerged. About this time he received a call to become the Pastor of a Presbyterian church in Charleston, S. C.; and, notwithstanding his reluctance to leave a congregation to whom he was so much attached, and among whom he had laboured so pleasantly and so successfully, he could not resist the conviction that it was his duty, in view of the probable

effect of a permanent residence in the South upon his health, to make the proposed removal. He therefore accepted the call, and his pastoral relation at Morristown was dissolved on the 8th of October, 1823.

He was installed by the Charleston Union Presbytery on the 3d of December, 1823. Every thing in connection with his introduction here gave promise of extensive usefulness. The congregation, of which he assumed the pastoral charge, received him with great cordiality and kindness, and he found, not only in his own flock but among his brethren in the ministry, an efficient co-operation for the advancement of the great interests of Christ's Kingdom. The following letter, addressed to his brother about three years after his settlement in Charleston, shows that, in removing to the South, he had not got out of the range of what his heart delighted in so much, — powerful revivals of religion.

Charleston, *December* 11, 1826.

My Dear Brother :

On my return from the meeting of our Synod, two or three days since, I received the copy of your System of Theology, which you have been so kind as to send me, and for which please to accept my warmest thanks. The work has circulated considerably here, and I think has been useful. I have read a part of it, and with much more than ordinary interest. My impression is that it will do good ; and that, I think, is the best test of merit.

Our Synod has just closed a most interesting session. They met at Washington in Georgia. The Lord had prepared the ground for us by commencing in that place, before we met, a revival of his work. A most powerful impulse was given to the work by the meeting of the brethren ; and more interesting scenes than were witnessed there, I think have seldom passed under my eye. In several places in the upper part of Georgia interesting revivals are now in progress. In the University of Georgia, at Athens, the Lord has been doing a great work. Nearly thirty of the students are hopefully subjects of grace ; and more than fifty are under deep impressions. As ministers are so much wanted in this country, this is a work of deep interest to the friends of Zion. I have just heard also of a revival having commenced in the interior of the State, in a very destitute region, under the preaching of one of our missionaries. The Lord is doing great things for us, whereof we are glad. The Narrative of the State of Religion within our bounds will soon be published, and I will take care that a copy is forwarded to you.

In our churches here there is nothing special. Evangelical religion, however, is, I think, daily gaining ground, and the same is true of Presbyterianism. We expect, in the course of one or two weeks, to commence the publication of a Presbyterian newspaper. I will send you the first number as soon as it appears.

Our family are in good health, and not one of our number has suffered in the least from sickness during the season. My own health also is quite good. I kept up most of the regular public services during the warm season, and suffered little inconvenience from it.

With love to all, I am
Your attached brother,
WILLIAM A. McDOWELL.

In 1827, he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Franklin College, Georgia. In 1832, he

was Moderator of the General Assembly; and the same year was chosen Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C. He had taken a deep interest in that institution from its foundation, and had done more than any other man to sustain and advance its interests; but he could not be persuaded that the indications of Providence were in favour of his accepting a Professorship. The following letter to his brother at Elizabethtown will be read with interest, not merely for its historical details in reference to his connection with the Seminary, but on account of the allusion which it makes to the then threatening aspect of public affairs in the South.

CHARLESTON, *January* 2, 1833.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

Yours of the 24th ult. I received a day or two since, and sincerely thank you for it. At all times letters from my friends are gratefully welcomed by me; but, at the present eventful moment, when our country is so much agitated, and such strange events are daily occurring, it is especially gratifying to me to hear frequently from those I love. And notwithstanding I have now lived more than nine years in the South, and have formed many strong and tender attachments here, and am regarded in fact as a Southern man, I have not lost a particle of my Northern feeling, and every thing that bears the stamp of the North is still as dear to me as when I was living in your neighbourhood.

As for the Professorship, you will have learned from the newspapers, before this reaches you, that I have declined accepting it. Could I have taken counsel of my own feelings,

I would not have hesitated an hour ; and indeed I told both the Board and the Synod, when the appointment was made, that I could not accept. For two years past, they have been urging me to take a Professorship, but I have never given the least encouragement that I would consent to it. The Seminary is now becoming very important—it has about twenty students ; and it seems to be, under God, the great hope of the Southern churches. From the first, no small part of the burden of raising and supporting it has devolved upon me. The Synod determined to appoint me Professor of Theology, and throw on me the responsibility of saying yea or nay, after the appointment was made ; and they placed it pretty much on this ground,—that I must consent to go or the Seminary would probably fail. Indeed several important pledges were made, on condition of my accepting the place. It was under such circumstances that I felt constrained to take the matter into consideration. But, after the most careful and painful and prayerful deliberation, I found it impossible to bring my mind to accept, and I accordingly declined.

You express great anxiety that I should leave the South, and once more make my home in the North. I thank you for your kind interest in my welfare, and I will certainly tell you my whole heart on the subject. I should have no fears on the score of my health about going North, as I am now quite well, and able, as I believe, to endure a Northern winter. And the state of things here I confess is truly alarming. Should the present crisis pass without a convulsion, I do not see that there is any security in respect to the future—there is so much combustible matter here that an explosion may take place at any moment. I do feel that there is an awful cloud hanging over the South, and particularly over South Carolina, which, at some day, not far distant, must burst; and what will follow God only knows. And should I ever remove from Charleston, I should not think of locating myself again in any part of the South. But, at the same time, the excitement produced by my appointment as Professor would indicate

that I should probably find it a very painful business to leave Charleston. And so involved have I become in the concerns of the Church throughout the two States of South Carolina and Georgia, and so intimately connected with the churches here, that perhaps in no other place could I exert the same amount of influence, or have the same facilities for doing good. At present all is quiet in our city, and there seems to be some hope that we may yet escape a war. But we know not what a day may bring forth. Should we be all spared until spring, I expect to visit the North, and to attend the meeting of the General Assembly.

Let me hear from you soon. I cannot tell you how cheering your letters are to me.

Your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM A. McDOWELL.

As Dr. McDowell had been Moderator of the General Assembly, the preceding year, it devolved upon him to preach the Opening Sermon at the next meeting; and, accordingly, he left Charleston, with his family, towards the close of April, 1833, not more to discharge his duty at the Assembly than to give himself a season of relaxation for the benefit of his health. The following extract from a letter addressed to his brother, shortly before he left Charleston, shows what was then the state of his mind in connection with the first developments of the great controversy, which, for several years, agitated, and finally rent asunder, the Presbyterian Church.

"I hope we may have a pleasant and profitable meeting of the Assembly; though some letters have been received here expressing fears that it may be a season of considerable agitation. In this part of the Church, we know so little of the troubles at the centre, that we can hardly believe that there is any real danger; and for one I am not only disposed for peace, but inclined to do all I can to put down the violent and headstrong, on whatever side they may be found. And I cannot but hope that there are among the ministers of the Presbyterian Church a sufficient number who love the truth and the order of the Church, and who, with meekness, but firmness, will frown on every effort to produce jealousies and divisions. May the Spirit of the Lord be with us to influence and guide us in all our deliberations and decisions."

At the meeting of the Assembly above referred to, Dr. McDowell was appointed Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian Church. This appointment he thought it his duty to accept, and did accept; though at the expense of abandoning a field of labour in which he had been eminently useful, and seemed to be still greatly needed, as well as of sundering the tie which bound him to a most affectionate and devoted congregration. He returned to Charleston shortly after the sessions of the Assembly closed, and, to the great regret of his pastoral charge, secured a regular release from them, and then made his way to Philadelphia, and early in the autumn commenced his labours as Secretary of the Board.

Dr. McDowell, by his great wisdom, conscientiousness and diligence, quickly proved himself abundantly qualified for the place to which he was now introduced. His labours were exceedingly arduous, and his health, during much of the time, materially impaired; and yet his zeal so far triumphed over his physical infirmities that few men have occupied a similar place with greater efficiency. The year after he entered upon his Secretaryship, he had occasion, in the discharge of his official duties, to pay a visit to the South, and the welcome which he met from his former charge was not only grateful but jubilant. It was delightful to him to perceive that their affection for him had not even begun to wane; while it occasioned him deep regret that the place which he had vacated, as their Pastor, more than a year before, had not yet been filled. He seems to have had some serious difficulties to encounter, during this visit, in connection with his particular object,—the cause of Missions; and in one of his letters he writes that it will require all the wisdom he can get from Heaven and earth to meet them successfully—what they were does not clearly appear; though they do not seem to have occasioned him any long continued embarrassment.

Dr. McDowell suffered, for many years, from an affec-

tion of the throat, which rendered speaking, especially in public, a very difficult exercise to him. His hearing also gradually became so much affected that it was irksome to him to engage in much conversation. In the summer of 1840, he visited the Warm Springs, and afterwards the Hot Springs, of Virginia, and, at the latter, particularly, he experienced considerable improvement in his general health, and at least some temporary relief from his deafness; and he expressed the opinion that, if his official duties would have allowed him to give the waters a more thorough trial, he should have received a proportionally greater benefit from them. How much his heart was in his work, even in his seasons of greatest relaxation, may be inferred from the following extract of a letter to his brother, dated Hot Springs, August 21, 1840.

"I feel quite anxious to be in the office again, and know how matters are getting on. I find it no easy thing to rid myself of anxiety—indeed I am too deeply interested in the great cause to banish it from my mind for a single hour. While rambling over these mountains, solitary and alone, my mind has been dwelling on the magnitude of the object which our Board contemplates. This is a great and growing country, destined, I am persuaded, to be the main instrument, in the Lord's hands, for the conversion of a world; and how important is it to the destinies of unborn millions that a Gospel influence should pervade the whole population of this land! Had I the power of hearing and speaking, as I once had, me-

thinks I should rejoice to spend a year in visiting all portions of our Church, and rousing them to vigorous action in some measure suited to the almost incomprehensible magnitude of the mighty object."

Towards the close of the same year (1840), Dr. McDowell made a tour still farther South, in aid of the interests of the Board, and, while in South Carolina, attended a meeting of Synod, which led him, shortly after, to address to his brother the following letter:

CHARLESTON, *December* 4, 1840.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

On our arrival here, I wrote you a few lines, which I hope you received. The next morning we left Charleston for Augusta, where we spent the night; and Saturday morning, November 21st, we went to Beach Island, seven miles from Augusta, on the Savannah river. We had a very pleasant meeting of our Presbytery, and, after its adjournment, we returned to Augusta to meet the Synod. The Synod was unusually full, and the meeting was one of the most interesting we have ever had. Several subjects of unusual interest came up for consideration, and occasioned much animated discussion; chief among which was the whole subject of Boards and Agencies in the operations of the Church. Brother C—— and Brother T—— had come well prepared to overthrow the whole system; and each of these luminaries having a number of smaller lights revolving around them, and influenced by them, they had mustered their whole host, and I believe really supposed they could carry the subject triumphantly through; but they were met with firmness and completely discomfited. The discussion occupied two days—the second day until about eleven o'clock, p. m. The house was filled to overflowing by the people of Augusta, and the interest was intense and gen-

eral. The principal speakers on the one side were Messrs. C. and T.—on the other Mr. L. made one or two excellent speeches ; Mr. S. of Charleston was clear, forcible and conclusive ; and your brother, deaf as he is, spoke at one time, about an hour and a half. The question was taken by yeas and nays. The revolutionists had seven votes, and the other side,—that is, those in favour of the Boards, about fifty. The effect of the discussion has been most salutary. There was much ignorance and great apathy on this whole subject in this portion of the Church, and indeed many strong prejudices —the result has been that light has been communicated, prejudices removed, ministers and elders roused to increased exertion, and a new impulse given to the whole cause. We all rejoiced in the opportunity which the discussion afforded of bringing the several Boards prominently before the Synod. Several other important subjects were introduced, which led to much animated discussion ; but the best feeling prevailed, and it was delightful to find that we could differ on important subjects, and discuss freely, and warmly, and still, in the best sense, be perfectly harmonious. During our meeting, my time was much occupied with the business of the Synod, and particularly of the Theological Seminary. As I was one of the Directors of the Seminary whose time of service expired at this meeting, I begged to be left off the nomination, as I could not hear their discussions ; but my wish was not complied with, and I was re-elected. The Domestic Missionary cause, I find, is almost entirely prostrate here—they are in debt for the few missionaries they have, and are literally doing nothing. I did what I could in Synod to rouse them, and I hope not without some effect. They have agreed hereafter to act with and through the Board ; and to help set them in motion, I have agreed to spend two or three weeks in Georgia, and visit Augusta, Athens, Washington, Greensboro' and Macon ; and this will detain me longer than I intended from the office —but the case seems imperatively to demand it ; and as I am now here, I suppose the Committee would prefer that I

should take one or even two weeks more than I anticipated, in order to do the work as effectually as I can. My brethren of the Board may rest assured that I shall not spend a day in idleness, nor remain an hour after my work is done. My deafness is a sore trial to me in this important business, but through the Divine goodness, I have got along much better than I expected. Your attached brother,

W. A. McDOWELL.

Though Dr. McDowell's infirmities were all the time rather gaining upon him, he still continued his labours with little or no abatement, not only discharging with great fidelity his duties at the office, but visiting many of the more important churches, and bringing his object very effectively to their attention and patronage. In 1847, he had become so feeble that he signified his desire and intention to resign his office; but yielded to urgent solicitations not to do it at that time. In the spring of 1850, however, such was the state of his health that he found it imperative to withdraw from all active service, and he accordingly tendered his resignation, which was accepted very reluctantly, though with a deep sense of the Church's obligation to him for his long continued and most important services.

Dr. McDowell, feeling that he had now nearly closed his earthly labours, turned his eyes towards the home of his early years as the spot where he would like to

spend the little of life that remained to him. Accordingly, shortly after the resignation of his office, he removed from Philadelphia to Lamington, and settled down amidst the scene of his early remembrances and associations. But it was impossible that, with such a spirit as he possessed, he could do otherwise than labour still up to the full measure of his ability. He spent the summer of 1850 at his "Retreat," in Lamington, preaching occasionally, as his health would permit, and dividing his time chiefly between his pen, his books, and his friends. On hearing of the death of Dr. Cuyler, with whom he had long been in the most intimate relations, he writes thus to his brother:—

"The death of our excellent brother, Dr. Cuyler, is a solemn, and, in some of its aspects, a sad event. After what I had heard of his illness, I was somewhat prepared for a fatal result. I find it difficult to realize that he is gone, and that I shall see his face no more. He was indeed an excellent brother, and possessed some noble traits of character. I saw him oft, and knew him well, and loved him much. God has called him away at a time when we looked not for it, but God's time is always the best. May his death be sanctified to his brethren who are left on earth a little longer. Truly, my dear brother, what we do for the souls of our fellow creatures must be done quickly. However short may be the time that remaineth to us, the work we yet have to do is great, and we have not a moment to lose. Oh the infinite value of each passing hour! The Lord help us to be diligent and faithful."

In the autumn of this year (1850), Dr. DcDowell, accompanied by Mrs. McDowell, made his last visit to his friends in the South, in the hope that his health might be benefited by that more genial climate. They were received by their friends in Charleston with the warmest demonstrations of affectionate regard, and, in compliance with their urgent solicitations, they remained somewhat longer than they had intended. The people of his former charge were permitted once more to enjoy a privilege which they highly prized,—that of hearing his voice in the pulpit. For some time after his arrival in Charleston, his health seemed somewhat improved; but before leaving the place, he was attacked with a chronic affection of the bowels, which greatly reduced his strength, and threatened a fatal issue. He also became deeply impressed, during this visit, with the delicate and perilous relations existing between North and South, and, in one of his letters, ventured a prediction of which the fearful scenes of the present day are nothing more than a fulfilment. Though he spent most of the winter in Charleston, he paid short visits to Camden, Columbia, and Hillsboro', N. C., where he had friends, and wherever he went, was met with a most cordial welcome. He returned to his residence in New Jersey,

in May, 1851, and shortly after, as appears from the following letter to his brother, was visited with a serious illness.

RETREAT, *June* 18, 1851.

MY DEAR BROTHER :

Your kind letter of the 12th inst. came by the mail of yesterday. I thank you for it and will attempt a brief reply. I wrote you not long since, and gave you a full account of the illness with which our Heavenly Father has been pleased to visit me. I then expressed the hope that I was better and was slowly gaining strength ; and I venture to indulge that hope still, though my cough is troublesome and I continue very weak. The weather has been much against me. It is now quite dry, and rain is much needed ; but it is cold, especially in the mornings and evenings.

The Pluckemin people are going forward with some spirit. They have commenced their church edifice on a lot adjoining the old grave yard. They build there to avoid covering graves, and a threatened law suit The site is a good one.

The Lord seems disposed to keep you from stagnating. And for your general good health you owe Him much. You have indeed a heavy task, but I am persuaded that few others could do it as well as you, and I rejoice in your good success. That building will remain after your work on earth is done, as a precious monument to your indefatigable industry and perseverance in the best of causes. May a kind providence enable you to complete the important enterprise ; and when finished, may God, by his Spirit, take up his abode there. It is the presence of the Holy Spirit and that alone, that can give prosperity to a church. Oh that we all felt this more deeply than we do. We greatly need an unction from the Holy One.

As soon as I am able, I wish to write to your Presbytery, and give some account of myself. Although not now within

their bounds, I am not prepared at present to change my Presbyterial connection. Should my health be restored, I do not expect to spend the winter here, and I know not exactly where I may be. If I have strength to labour, I do not expect to be idle. If my health should not be restored, I shall not be in a situation to join any other body. I trust my good brethren of the Presbytery will not object to my retaining my present connection, until I can see more clearly what God designs for me.

Let me hear from you soon and often, and believe me

Your affectionate brother,

WILLIAM A. McDOWELL.

Dr. McDowell continued in a feeble state during the summer, and yet he was able to preach almost every Sabbath, and his voice became clearer and louder than it had been for a long time previous. In July, he officiated in laying the corner-stone of the church at Pluckemin, referred to in the preceding letter, and felt the deepest interest in the occasion. About the first of September, he went to Morristown, with a view to place himself under the care of his former physician, Dr. Johnes, in whom he had great confidence. Even then he was not so ill as to occasion any immediate alarm; and he took with him a few sermons with the expectation that he might be able to preach at least a part of the time during his absence. Though his illness had been of long continuance, there was but little immediate warning of his death. He was himself

fully aware of its near approach; was perfectly calm and self possessed in the prospect, and expressed the full assurance of hope. The night before he died, he was much engaged in prayer for the Church, and for the cause of Missions, which was specially dear to his heart. His strength gradually declined, until he died, from exhaustion, on the 17th of September, 1851. His remains were removed to Lamington for burial, and the Sermon on occasion of his Funeral was preached by the Rev. Dr. William W. Blauvelt, from 1 Timothy, I, 12.

Mrs. McDowell still survives, with one son, who is an Elder in the Church, and a highly respectable medical practitioner in New Jersey.

## CHAPTER II.

### His Character.

I had the pleasure of a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Dr. McDowell, having first been introduced to him at his own house in Charleston, in the autumn of 1830, and having had frequent opportunities of intercourse with him from about the commencement of his residence in Philadelphia till near the close of his life. A part of what I design to say in respect to his character, in connection with some of his relations, of course comes to me on testimony; but I shall say nothing but what is in full keeping with, and might fairly be inferred from, the results of my own observation.

Dr. McDowell was eminently favoured in respect to the original elements of his character. He had a fine, clear, well-balanced intellect, which had not only been subjected to an early judicious training, but was kept under careful culture in connection with the great and diversified labours of his life. His moral character was marked by uncommon amiableness and kindliness

of spirit; by perfect openness and transparency; by a modesty that did not aspire to high places; by an admirable discretion that never compromised either dignity or consistency; and by an energy of purpose that never took counsel of fear, nor faltered in the most difficult enterprises. In his physical qualities he was much less favoured than in his intellectual or moral; for, however vigorous his bodily constitution may have been originally, from the age of twelve it was essentially and irremediably impaired. He was of a slender form, rather below the medium height, and, in his latter years especially, moved about with an air of feebleness. His countenance indicated thoughtfulness, gentleness, and earnestness; and his utterances fulfilled all that his looks foreshadowed. His manners formed a faithful exponent of his mind and heart. While there was nothing in his address to indicate either sympathy with, or adaptedness to, fashionable life, there was a freedom, and naturalness, and self-possession, that showed his familiarity with good society, and made his presence, in every circle, an element of pleasure.

Dr. McDowell's excellent moral qualities were all beautifully and thoroughly recast in the mould of a living Christianity. It was impossible to be in his

company, even for a short time, without perceiving that his was no ordinary type of Christian character; that faith, and patience, and hope, and humility, and gratitude, and all the graces, had reached a maturity and elevation in him, that distinguished him from most of those that bear the Christian name. He was eminently a devout man. The prayers that I have heard him offer showed that he was at home in his closet, — that there was no atmosphere which he breathed so freely as that which surrounds the throne of grace. His religion, while it was founded in a deep conviction of the great truths of the Gospel, diffused itself, by an all pervading influence, over his heart and life. He realized most deeply that his mission, as a regenerate child of God, was to do good; and his grand object seemed to be to make every faculty he possessed, every relation he sustained, tributary to the well-being of his fellow-men and the glory of his Master. And over all his devout exercises and manifestations, and all his earnest Christian activity, there was cast an air of winning cheerfulness, which delighted everybody, and lent a charm to Christianity, even in the eyes of those who could not feel its more spiritual attractions.

As a Preacher, Dr. McDowell took rank among the most evangelical, earnest, effective preachers of his

day. His voice was originally clear and pleasant, but in his later years, and, if my memory serves me, from the time that I first heard him preach, disease had so far affected his vocal organs that his speaking was difficult and laboured—he would, however, as he advanced and waxed warm in his sermon, recover, in a good degree, the command of his voice, and, before he was at the end of it, you would wonder what had become of the hoarseness with which he started. His manner in the pulpit was simple, dignified and commanding. Without the least approach to any thing that would make you feel that he was trying to be eloquent, there was an earnestness in his looks and utterances, and very attitudes, that the most indifferent hearer would find it difficult to resist. And then what he said was in full harmony with his manner of saying it—it was the simple truth of God's word, presented in its due proportions, and its legitimate relations, without any admixture of splendid rhetoric or profound disquisition. His sermons were far enough from being mere religious rhapsodies or exhortations—on the contrary, they were full of evangelical instruction, clearly and logically presented; but everything that he said was practical—no doctrine that he preached was so high but that he showed its personal bearings upon the

conscience and hearts of his hearers—in short, all his deliverances in the pulpit clearly evinced that he felt that he was an ambassador of God, and that he had nothing to do but to proclaim and enforce the message which had been given him.

As a Pastor, Dr. McDowell was a model of wisdom, affectionate carefulness, and fidelity. He moved about among his people like a father and a brother, and nothing that in any way involved their happiness escaped his thoughtful and benevolent regard. To the children of sorrow he was a very Son of Consolation, endeavouring, at the same time, to render their afflictions a ministration of spiritual blessing. The wayward and the dissolute he sought to reclaim by timely and solemn admonitions; the anxious and the heavy-laden he urged to the Cross as the only place of refuge and of rest; those whom he saw faltering in their Christian course he endeavoured to stimulate to a higher sense of duty; and the steadfast and active followers of Christ he encouraged, not only by his counsels but by his example, to a vigorous co-operation for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause. Persons of every age and every description, not excepting even those who were far from righteousness, respected, honoured and loved him.

In each of the congregations to which he ministered, especially the two last, there were very marked results from his ministry—not a small number, both at Morristown and at Charleston, were hopefully converted through his instrumentality; and the church, in each place, acquired increased stability and efficiency under his pastorate. But his greatest usefulness, after all, was undoubtedly in connection with his position as Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions. For this office he was remarkably qualified, not only by his great practical wisdom and good judgment, but by his rare executive ability, his familiarity with the forms of business, and his unusual tact in accommodating himself to men of every variety of taste and character. In all his personal and official relations with his brethren, with whom he was thus more immediately associated, he was most considerate and obliging; and most highly did they value his counsels and his sympathy. The best comment upon his ability and fidelity in conducting this important agency is the signal success by which his labours were attended. Upon his accession to the office, the condition of the Board was greatly depressed, and it was deeply felt that some energetic hand was needed to infuse into it new vigour, and to enlarge the field of its operations. Dr. McDowell went

quietly to work in his new vocation, and it quickly became manifest that the Church had judged rightly in assigning to him this important place. Each successive year witnessed to a greatly increased interest in the cause of Domestic Missions, until the Church at large became in a good degree awake to its importance. He had the satisfaction, during the seventeen years that he was connected with the Board, of seeing its receipts increased from 25,000 to nearly 80,000 dollars; and the number of ministers and missionaries from 209 to 570; and the Church extended widely over our country, and from 30 to 40,000 souls hopefully converted through the instrumentality of this Board. He laboured in this cause with a zeal and perseverance to which it would not be easy to fix the limit; and, though others have entered into his labours, and others still will follow in an indefinite succession, it will always be true that he was among those who have had a primary influence in extending the borders of our Church, and bringing under Christian culture regions that seemed destined to perpetual barrenness.

It is scarcely necessary to add that, in all his private and domestic relations, Dr. McDowell was most exemplary and attractive. What he was as a husband and a father,—how tender, and wise, and faithful, is writ-

ten deep in the remembrance and sensibilities of those to whom he sustained these endearing relations. What he was as a friend,—how true, and generous, and self-sacrificing, is attested by the gratitude and reverence with which multitudes still pronounce his name. Every community in which he has lived has loved to do him honour; but the most delightful reflection concerning him is, that, though his name should fade from every earthly record, it is indelibly engraven in the register of the saved and the glorified; even of those who, having turned many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

## CHAPTER III.

### Commemorative Letters.

I.

Elizabethtown, *March* 27, 1864.

My Dear Brother:

I love the memory of Dr. W. A. McDowell too well, and have too high an appreciation of his worth, intellectual and moral, not to respond to your request for some of my recollections of his character. My only regret is that I have not the leisure, or the health just now, to do fuller justice to the subject.

Dr. McDowell entered upon the ministry of the Gospel while I was preparing for it, and, as he often preached for his brother in Elizabethtown, where I was born and brought up, I heard some of his first sermons. My acquaintance with him commenced then, and it continued, with great pleasure and profit to myself, as long as he lived. It does me good, at this late day, to think of him as a dear friend. There was no difficulty in knowing him well, for if he did not carry his heart on the outside, to be gazed at, and commented on, by every passer by, he never carried a false heart, at any stage of his life. I never met a man more perfectly

free from pretence and assumption of every sort. Transparency in whatever he said or did was one of the prime excellences of his character, so prominent as easily to be seen and read of all with whom he came into contact. Making it his grand aim to be right, he could not practise dissimulation, or look one way while he was moving another.

Often did it seem to me a pity that so good and large a mind was put into so frail a body. The casket was not at all worthy of the priceless gem which it contained. A disease that overtook him in early youth, left an impress of weakness upon his whole physical frame, which no change of scene, or climate, or labour could remove; and eventually it hastened his departure from the world. His whole life was one long battle with debility, giving him the stoop of age while young, and leading him to preach as if he had "the sentence of death in himself." How often has my heart ached to mark with what feeble steps he ascended the pulpit stairs. No wonder that he preached as a dying man to dying men. A sermon which he delivered at that early period, on the words of Job,—"I would not live alway," and of which I have a very vivid remembrance, at the distance of half a century, seemed to me as much like one's last utterances as could possibly be.

No doubt the state of his health had a great deal to do with his choice of texts, and his mode of treating them.

Yet it would be a great mistake to conclude that he was an unattractive preacher, repelling the youthful and the buoyant, like the appearance of a death's head. The very opposite was the fact. There was such an air of cheerfulness overspreading his solemnity, and so much of hope and joy connected with his deep lookings into eternity, that he seldom failed to attract the feelings, and win the sympathy of his hearers. He excelled in earnestness and unction. These qualities were apparent to every listener, and they rendered his ministrations unusually impressive. I never wondered that he was loved and respected at Bound Brook, the first field of his labours; nor that he was still more highly valued at Morristown, where he remained for a longer period; nor that he reached a still loftier eminence at Charleston, where he took rank with the most honoured and useful ministers of the whole region. Here it was thought he had attained to the acme of his influence and power. God blessed his labours in that city with two precious revivals of religion. On many accounts, this seemed to be the spot, where his talents could be excited to the very best advantage, as well in the city

itself as throughout the entire South. But his strength was unequal to the great work before him.

His last service for the Church of God was that of Secretary of the Assembly's Board of Domestic Missions, requiring a happy combination of talents not very frequently found. For reasons which need not here be enumerated, the juncture in the affairs of that institution was a very serious one. But worn as Dr. McDowell had been with other labours, he brought to this difficult and important post an amount of zeal, and tact, and kindheartedness, and far-seeing prudence, in the office and out of it, corresponding with missionaries and addressing churches, which has seldom been surpassed. Hundreds can bear record that, "to his power, yea and beyond his power," he devoted himself to the great enterprise. But his frail constitution at length gave way. His hearing failed to such a degree that he could scarcely distinguish the tones of his own voice, and his organs of articulation seemed to have utterly exhausted their power. Bear up for a long time he did with indomitable resolution. It was affecting to witness such a mastery of mind over matter, and he was often heard with all the more interest because of the victory we saw him gain over the infirmities of nature.

To give up as one who could work no longer was his severest trial. Had he only been blessed with robust health, and with lungs and voice of ordinary capacity, he would have stood fully abreast with the most useful men our Church has produced.

As a companion, whether under his own hospitable roof, or in the houses of his friends, he was all that the purest and most elevated friendship could desire. I am not alone in the opinion that his conversational powers were remarkable, and though he could tell a good story, and raise a hearty laugh, and laugh loudly himself, there was in it all so charming a modesty, and so thoughtful a regard to the feelings of others that there seemed no room for any thing but innocent enjoyment. If the interview lasted until midnight, nothing was said on his part, to render the bed uneasy, or plant thorns in the pillow. I must affirm I never heard him make a single censorious remark. You could not but feel well repaid for the loss of a little sleep, in the recollection of the pleasant converse you had enjoyed with one so guileless and at the same time so lively, so fond of talk and yet talking so well. How sweetly does the memory of his face and his smiles steal over the minds of his many friends, to this day! Where can be found a larger share of fraternal kindness, ten-

der affection, and genuine amiability, all underlaid by a depth of Christian principle and feeling which every body acknowledged? I do not go too far when I say he was like "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

The time now came when he had to withdraw from public work altogether, and he did it with the grace and goodliness of Him who said "He must increase but I must decrease." His last days were spent on a beautiful little farm, which he had prepared as a retreat from cares and toils which he could no longer bear; almost in sight of the spot where he first opened his eyes upon the light of life, and in the midst of friends and neighbours who had loved him from his childhood. Death overtook him somewhat suddenly, but his loins were girded and his lamp was burning.

Among my many dear friends, gone to a better world, there are few whose memory I cherish with a warmer affection, or whose excellences I should more love to portray. It is a delightful thought that Heaven is rapidly filling up with such people. May we be ready to join them!

Very truly and affectionately yours,

DAVID MAGIE.

II.

From the Rev. H. A. Boardman, D. D.

Philadelphia, *April* 28, 1864.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

You ask me for any recollections that may occur to me respecting the late Dr. William A. McDowell. I am sorry that it is out of my power to send you the sort of letter which such a request is understood to imply. For eventful incidents and occasions in his experience, you will have to look to other sources. I can only say that his name is cherished in our city as that of a man fully devoted to his Master's service. The office he filled of Secretary of the Board of Domestic Missions of our Church is one of equal delicacy and responsibility. To the discharge of its duties he brought a vigorous and well furnished mind, a singularly equable temper, a heart full of kindly sympathies, a sound judgment, most affable manners, the various culture supplied by a ripe pastoral experience, and the pervading presence and power of an earnest piety. No one could be with him without perceiving that his maxim was "This one thing I do." He had taken the gauge of his great work, and made up his mind that by no rashness nor negligence on his part should it ever be put in peril. It was no mere official tie which bound

him to our excellent missionaries in the field. He was one with them in purpose and sympathy. Their trials were his trials. Their triumphs were his triumphs. In their perplexities they found him a prudent counsellor. When their feelings had been wounded or irritated, he knew how to soothe them. When cases of peculiar distress occurred, he was prompt in seeking and sending the needful relief. In the pulpit and before the Courts of the Church, he plead the cause of Home Missions with marked ability and with eminent success. And his abundant labours in conducting this great interest entitle him to a place among those faithful men whom the Church holds in grateful and lasting remembrance.

I might speak of Dr. McDowell's fine social qualities of his freedom from all acerbity and censoriousness; or the warmth of his friendly greetings; of the kindly sympathy with which he would enter into whatever concerned you; and of that most obliging disposition which made him so ready to do you a good turn to-day and another to-morrow, and so on as long and as often as your necessities required.

But I am too much pressed for time at this moment to dwell upon these pleasant topics, and I must either decline your request altogether, or send you this hur

ried note,—a very scant and imperfect tribute to the memory of a valued personal friend and a faithful ambassador for Christ.

I remain, my dear Sir, with sincere respect and affection, your friend and brother,

HENRY A. BOARDMAN.

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III.

From the Rev. John Maclean, D. D.,
President of the College of New Jersey.

College of New Jersey,
Princeton, *May 5th*, 1864.

My Dear Sir:

At the time I received your favour of the 25th ult., I was suffering from a severe inflammation of my right eye, which prevented a prompt compliance with your request in regard to my much esteemed friends, the late Rev. Drs. John and Wm. A. McDowell. And even now I am scarcely able to do more than to give very brief replies to the letters which I am daily receiving; yet, in the present instance, as the case admits of no delay, I must venture somewhat; and add my testimony to the worth of these two excellent men and faithful servants of Christ. I knew them both from my early life, but was more intimate with the younger brother, who,

when I was a lad, and he a Tutor in the College, was wont to visit at my father's house, and whose friendship for our family continued throughout his life. Dr. John McDowell, the elder of the two brothers, I knew first as the Pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Elizabethtown, N. J., and as a Trustee of this College; always faithful to his official trusts, and successful in his efforts to promote the cause of piety and learning, and in one respect surpassing any Pastor of my acquaintance — I refer to his constantly directing the attention of the pious and promising youth of his church to the importance of the Christian Ministry, and to their own obligations in reference to it. Few men were ever more blessed in their labours, and few so worthy of imitation by those who desire to be faithful and successful in winning souls to Christ. He was a sincere man and a true friend.

Dr. Wm. A. McDowell was a favourite pupil of my father, who, for many years, was Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in this College, and its first teacher of Chemistry. During a part of the summer term of 1812, he supplied my father's place in the College as teacher of Mathematics, and sustained himself well. In the autumn of that year, if I err not, he entered the Theological Seminary of Princeton, which

had been recently established, the only Professor being the late venerable Dr. Archibald Alexander.

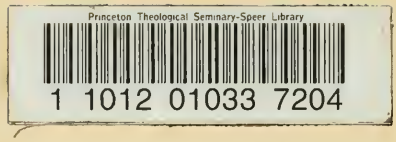
At that time there being no buildings erected for the Seminary, its students were permitted, if they desired it, to lodge in the College buildings, and to use the recitation rooms of the College at such hours as they were not wanted for College purposes. This led to a great intimacy between the students of the two institutions, and to a co-operation in their benevolent efforts. In these, Dr. (then Mr.,) W. A. McDowell, took an active part, and at the formation of the Nassau Hall Bible Society, he was chosen its first President, and wrote an Address setting forth the object for which it was established. The Address was published with a copy of the Constitution, as then adopted, and it was probably the first article from his pen that ever appeared in print. This was three years before the founding of the American Bible Society, at the formation of which, delegates were present from the Nassau Hall Bible Society. Those familiar with the history of the Bible agencies in our country know the important services rendered by the Nassau Hall Society in the first efforts made to supply every destitute family in the State of New Jersey with a copy of the Holy Scriptures.

In 1817, Dr. McDowell was chosen a Trustee of this College. In 1824 he resigned his seat at the Board, and was elected again the following year.

Dr. McDowell was a man of no ordinary ability. He was a good scholar, and an instructive preacher. Pious, active, cheerful, he was a most agreeable companion, and an exemplary Christian minister. I might say more — I could not say less.

With the highest respect and esteem, Yours,

JOHN MACLEAN.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